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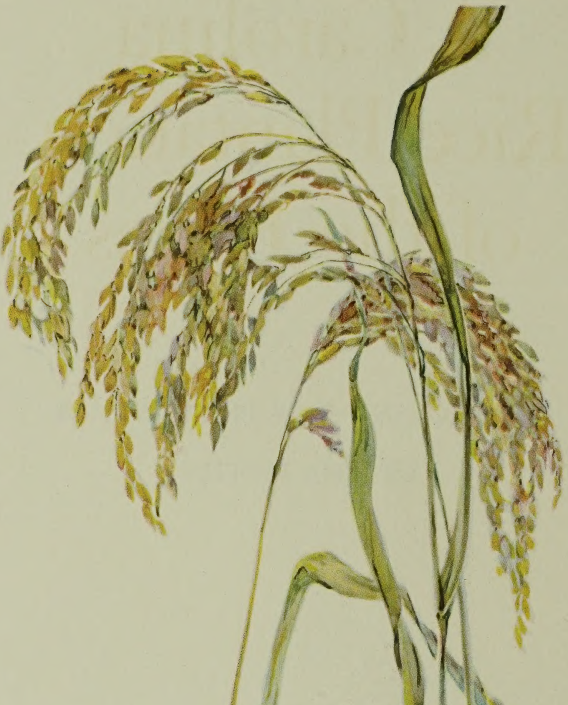
# A CAROLINA RICE PLANTATION OF THE FIFTIES



Carolina Gold Rice

# A Carolina Rice Plantation of the Fifties

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30 paintings in water-colour
by ALICE R. HUGER SMITH

Narrative by Herbert Ravenel Sass
With chapters from the unpublished memoirs of D. E. Huger Smith

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1936
WILLIAM MORROW AND COMPANY · NEW YORK

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A CAROLINA RICE PLANTATION

OF THE FIFTIES

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*Printed in the United States*

To the Memory of

Daniel Elliott Huger Smith

69684

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# PREFACE

Three forces have influenced the making of this book. The most powerful, perhaps, is the strain of love and interest that is very strong in those fortunate enough to remember and understand the workings of the rice plantations of former days.

The second is that throughout my life I have been trying to paint the rice-planting section of South Carolina—that long strip of flat lowlands lying within the influence of the tides which extended to about forty or fifty miles from the sea. The marshes, the fields and the forests, the canals, "the settlements," and the many other marks of a great industry, have been noted down by me for many years. I have seen much of it disappear and the remnants are vanishing year by year. Therefore I have brought into a sequence some of my notes and sketches for those who may be interested.

A third force has given life to this undertaking, and has also helped me in my effort for authenticity and accuracy. This came from the fact that I was born at the close of the Reconstruction period in this State, and was brought up in the days of ceaseless effort to build from the wreckage of the past a platform for the next generation to stand on. It was done gallantly and conscientiously, and looking back on my childhood, I can say very cheerfully, in spite of great hardships.

But the struggle naturally brought up description and discussion of former ways and means, with the effort of adaptation to the new and terribly difficult conditions. Throughout these years my uncle, Robert Tilghman Smith, was planting rice—at different times on the Cooper River, the Savannah River, and the Ashepoo.

There was yet another far-reaching source of knowledge. My grandmother, who lived to hear of the Armistice after the World War, was the youngest daughter of Judge Daniel Elliott Huger, who was himself born during the Revolution, married in the year 1800 and died just before the opening of the War between the States. From her I had the simple, natural point of view that saw the life of those days as a matter of course—not as a series of incidents to be described as quaint or interesting or dramatic, but as a routine of successful or unsuccessful days, with happiness or misfortune to be met with the resources at hand, and with all the poise and courage at one's command.

Her own knowledge of nearly a century, and the viewpoint of her parents, with whom she lived until their deaths (excepting the ten years of her married life), covered that long tale of years from the Revolution to the World War.

This was strengthened by her son (my Father) Daniel Elliott Huger Smith, who was in his turn a very careful and thorough student of history. Besides the broader philosophies of government and human development he was much interested in detail,—but only when it was accurate, and conscientiously verified. In gathering the material for "The Dwelling Houses of Charleston," which he and I wrote together, he also gathered a great deal of information about the extent and changes in tenure of many of the great plantations to add to his own personal familiarity with many of them.

During his lifetime these pictures of plantation life were begun, and this book planned. He left many notes, and also his unpublished reminiscences. From these I have quoted what seemed to apply to my present subject, omitting some but not all of the personal allusions. I have tried thus to keep the quality of first-hand knowledge.

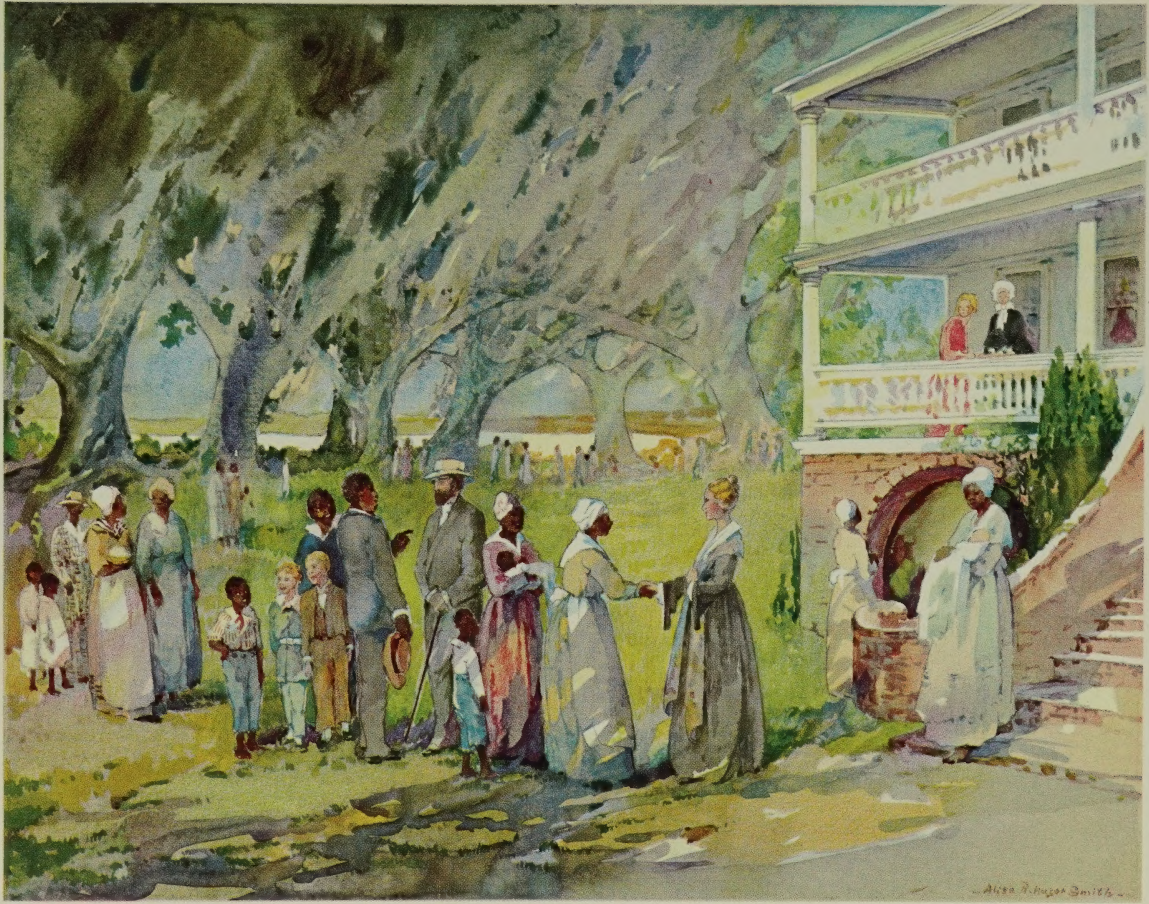
I have tried to preserve, through my paintings and the simple, straight-forward account of one who knew it well, a phase of daily human endeavor—the life of a rice plantation of the Fifties.

ALICE RAVENEL HUGER SMITH.

Charleston, S. C. 1936.

# ILLUSTRATIONS

*Sunday Morning at the Great House*


Alice R. Huger Smith

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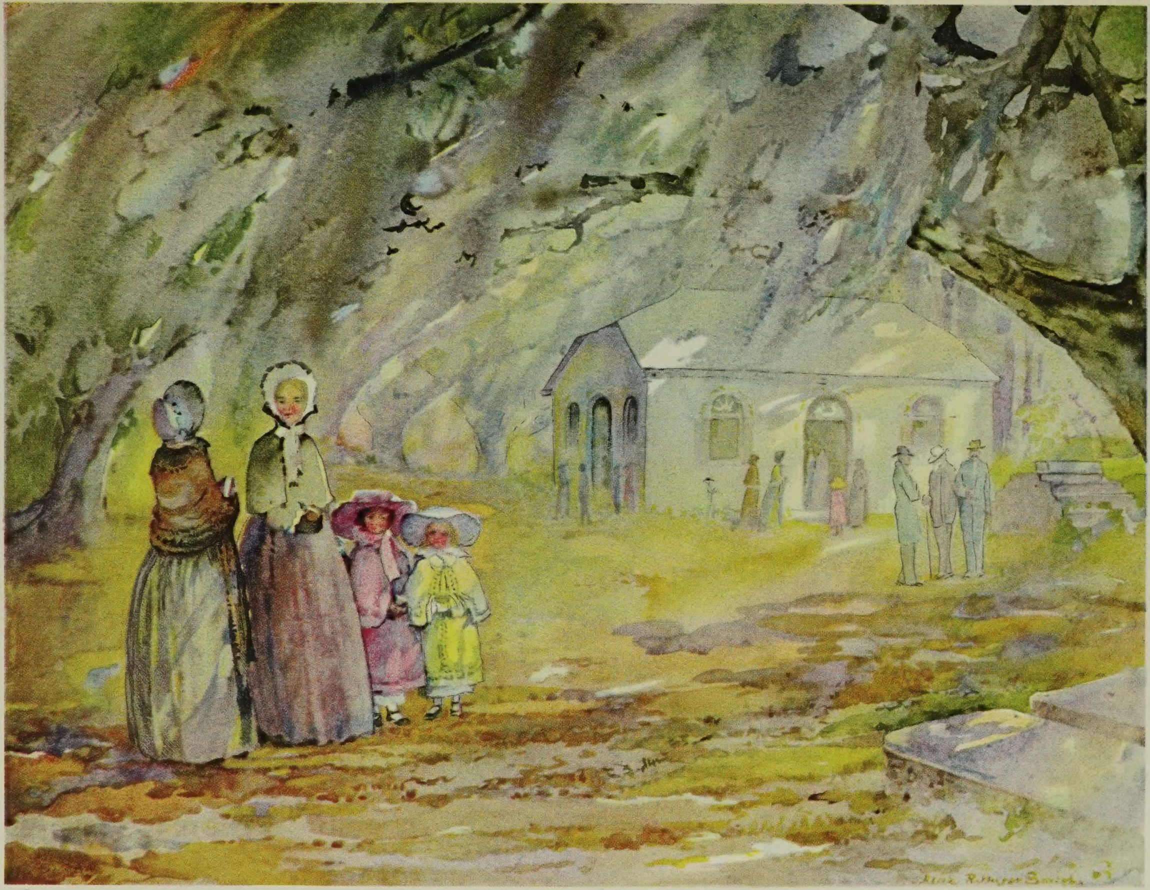
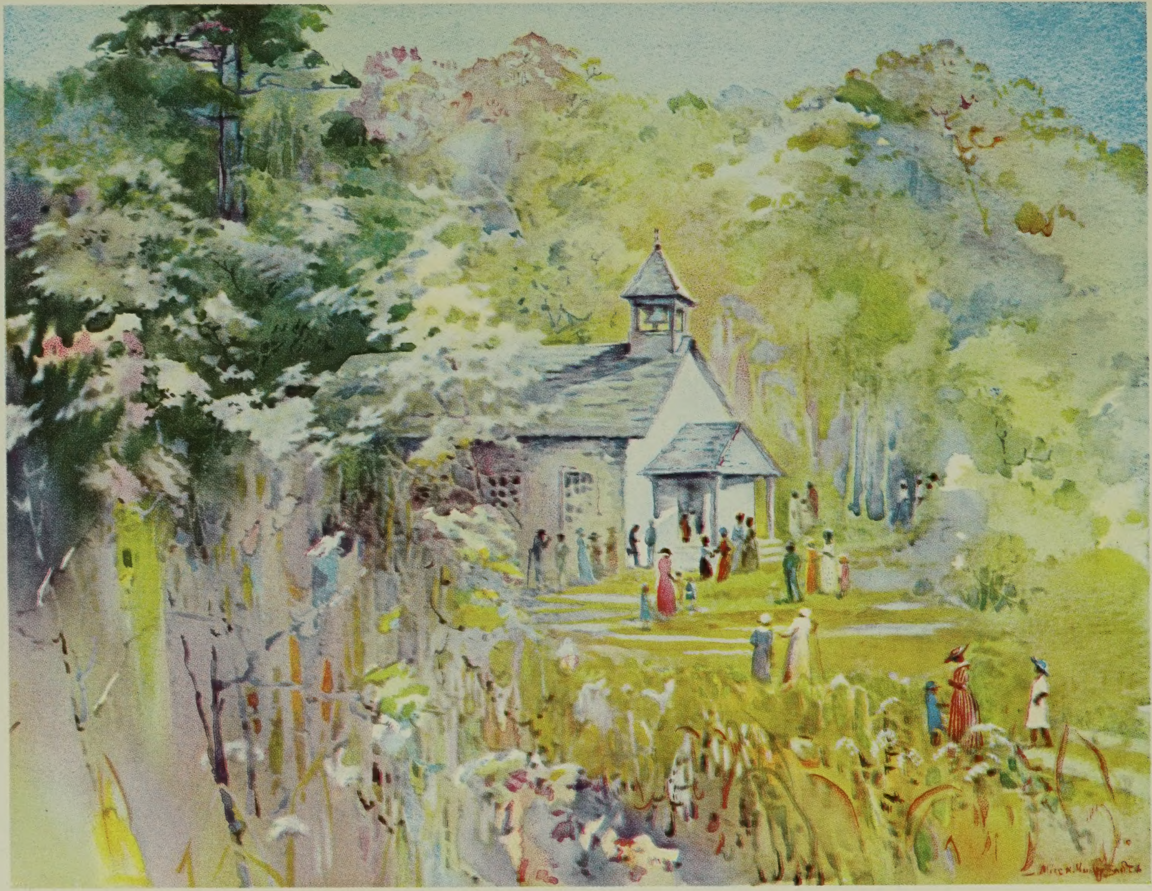


*The Plantation Church*



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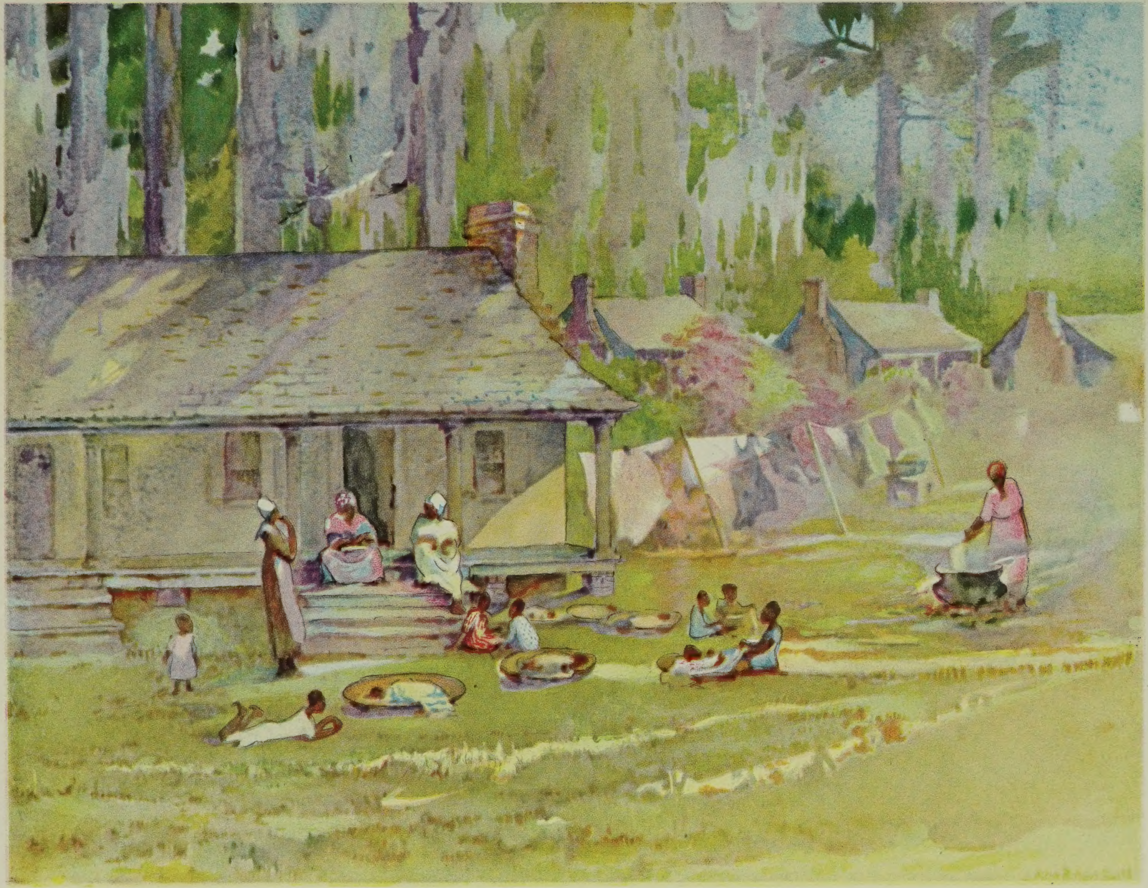

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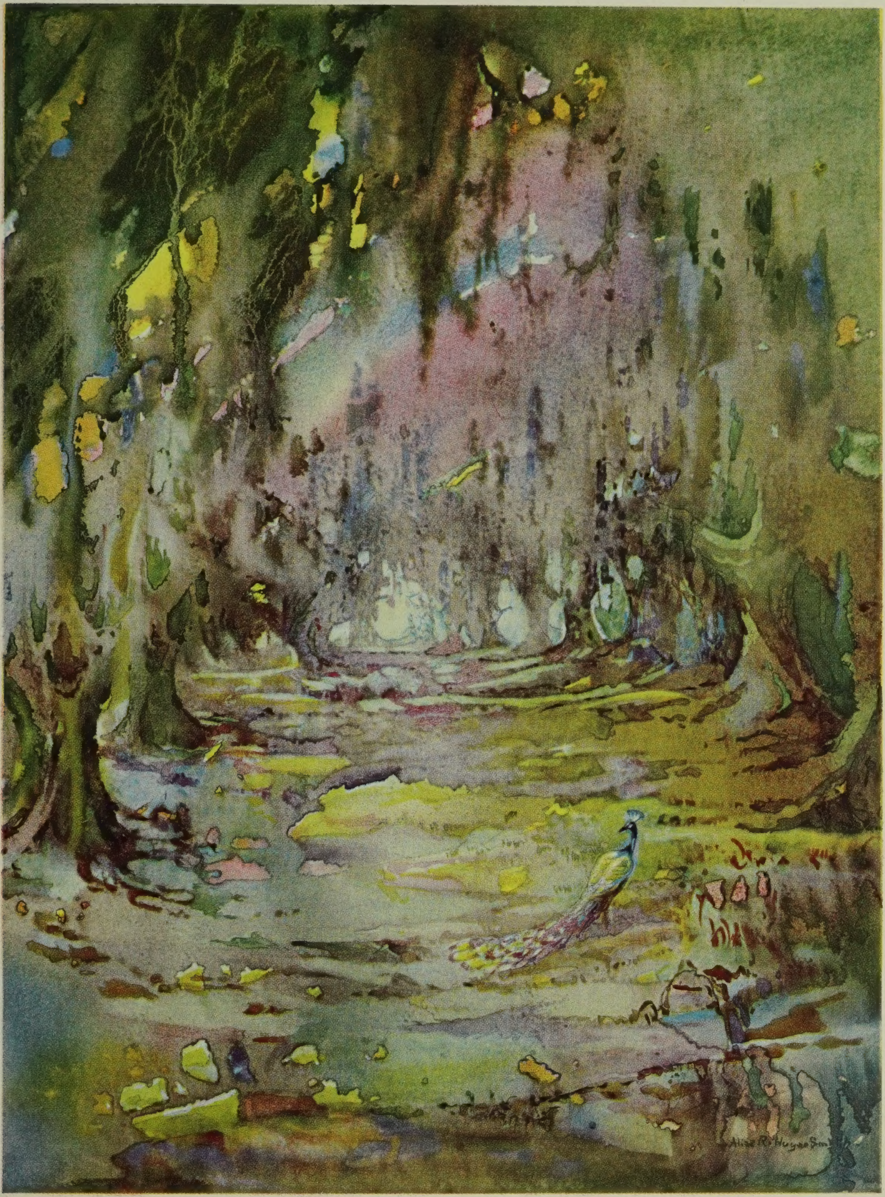
Alice R. Huger Sm

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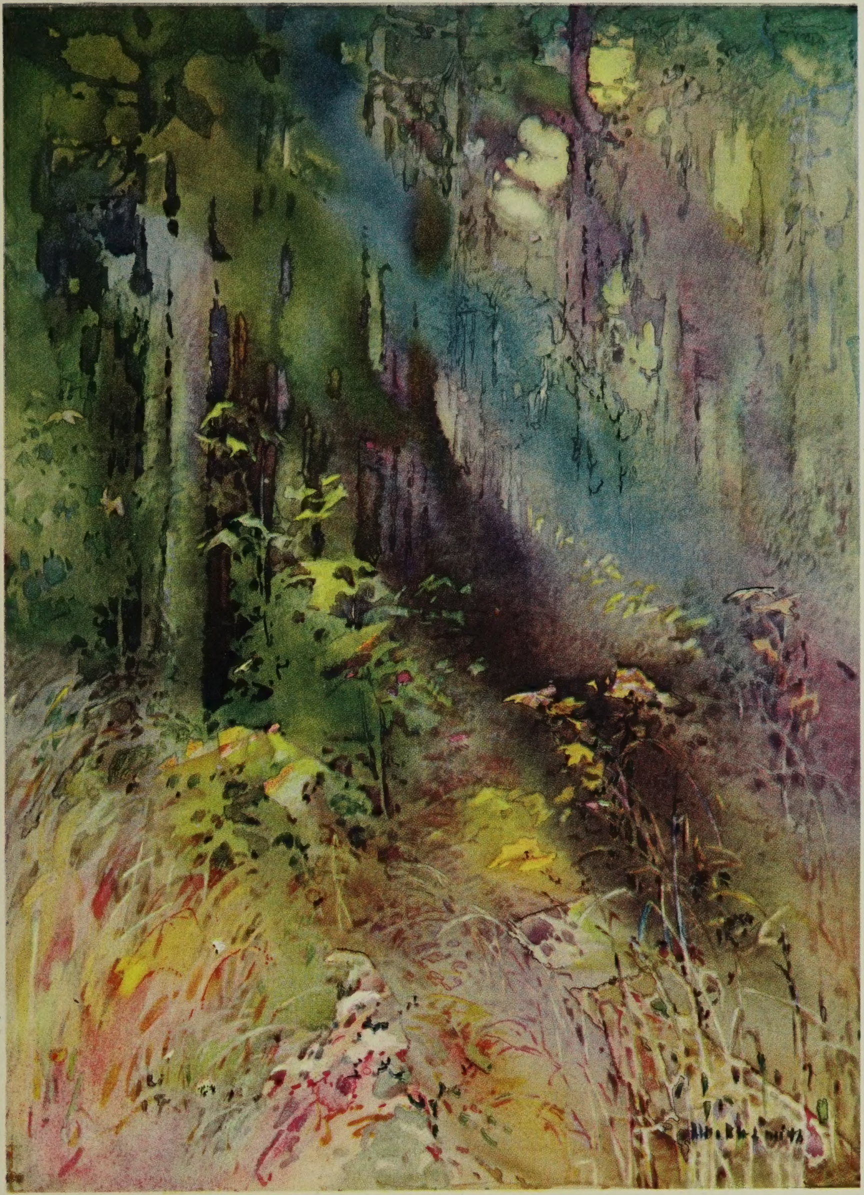

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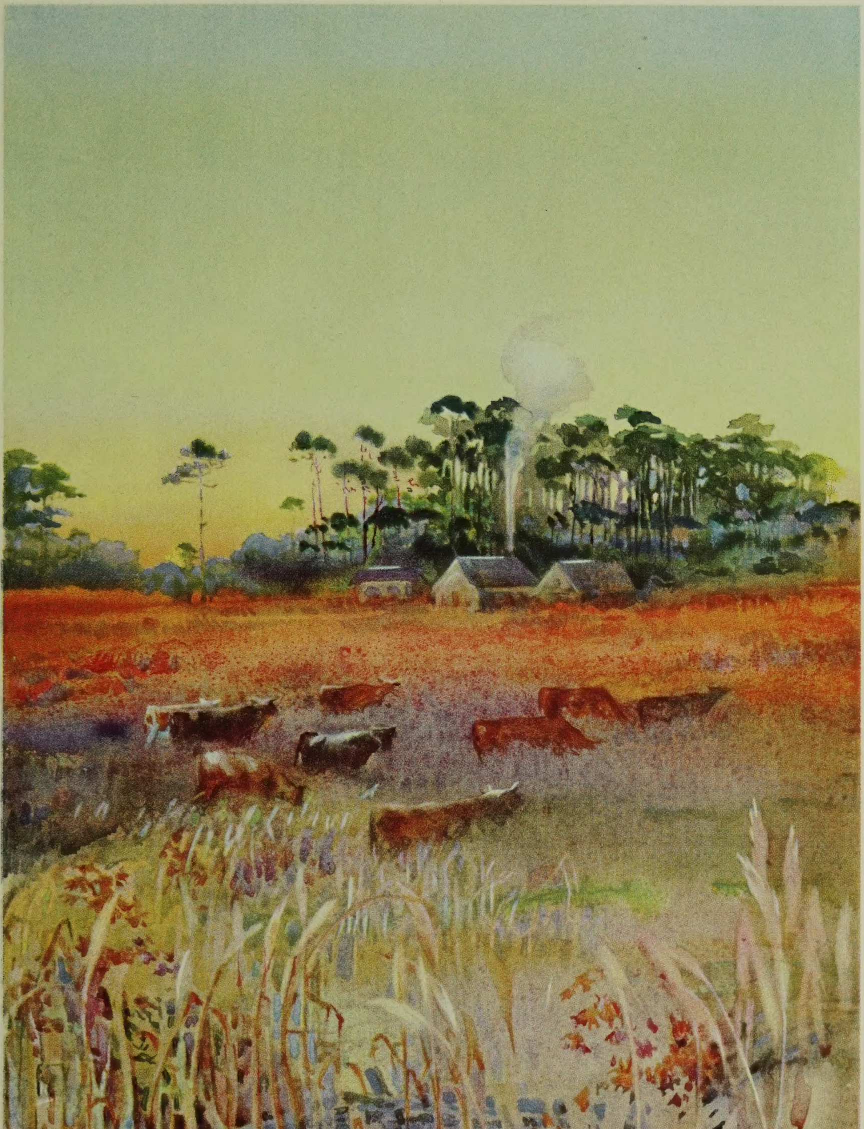
Alice R. Huger Smith

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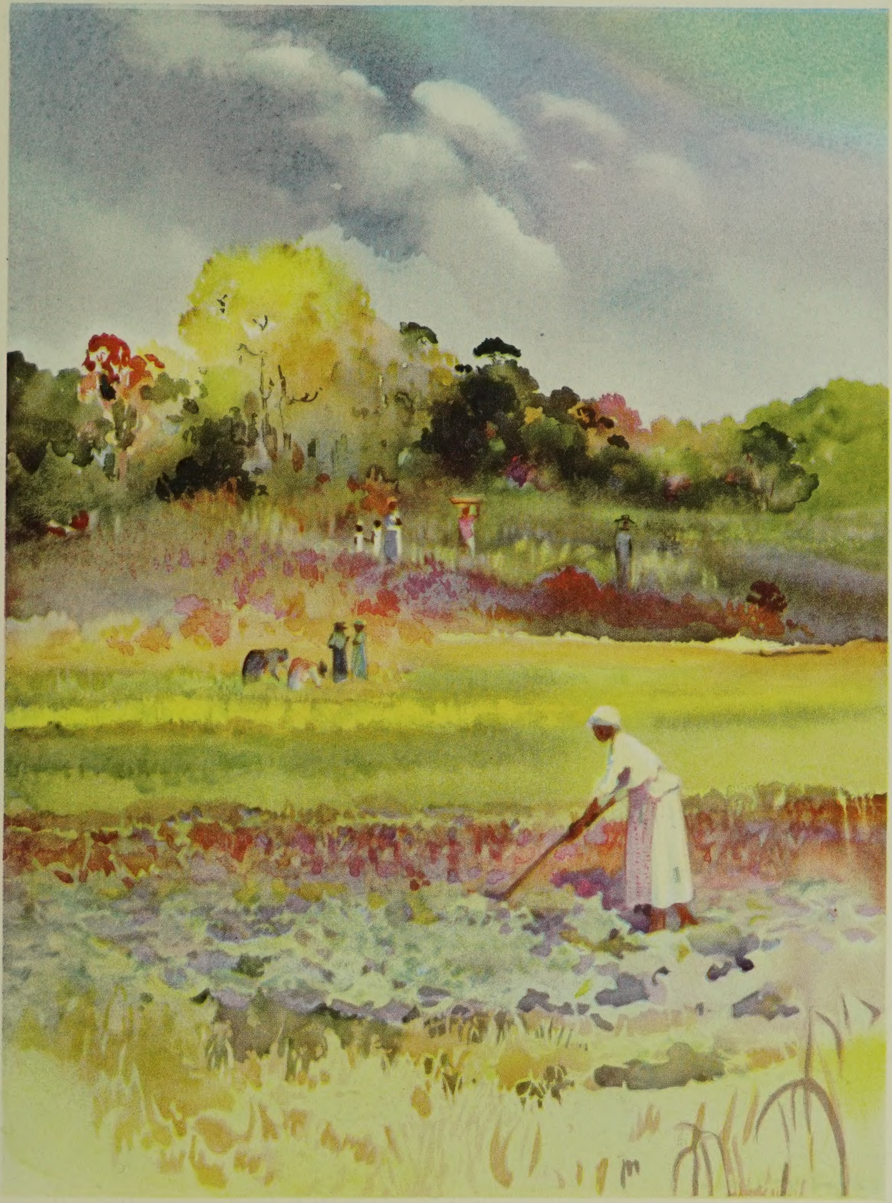

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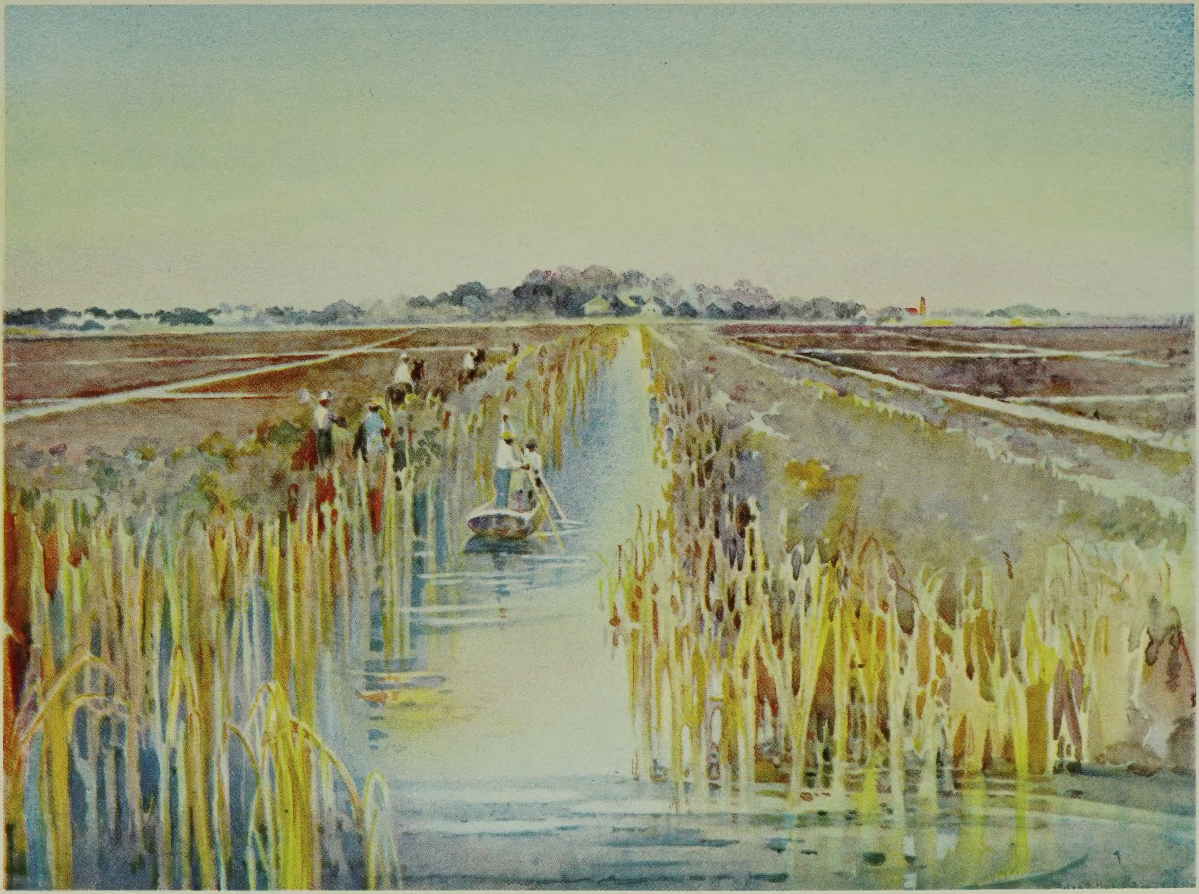

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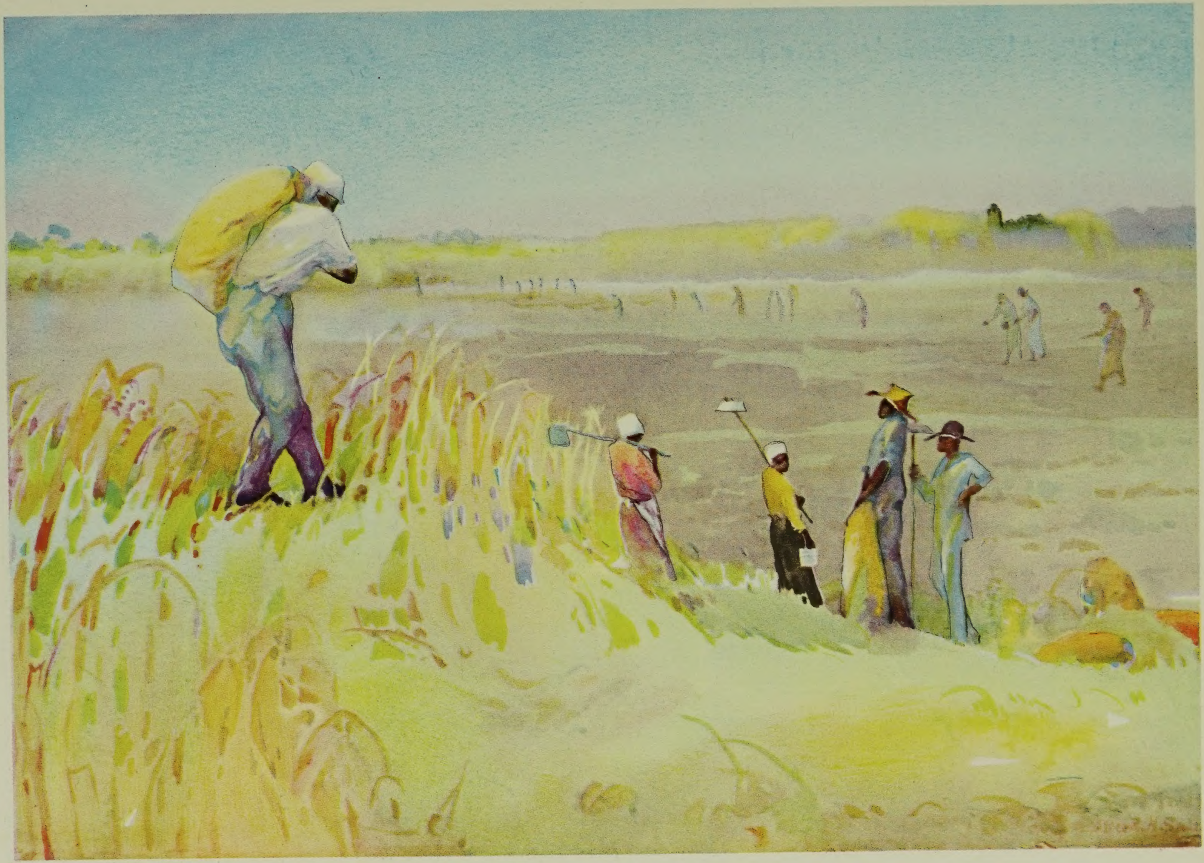

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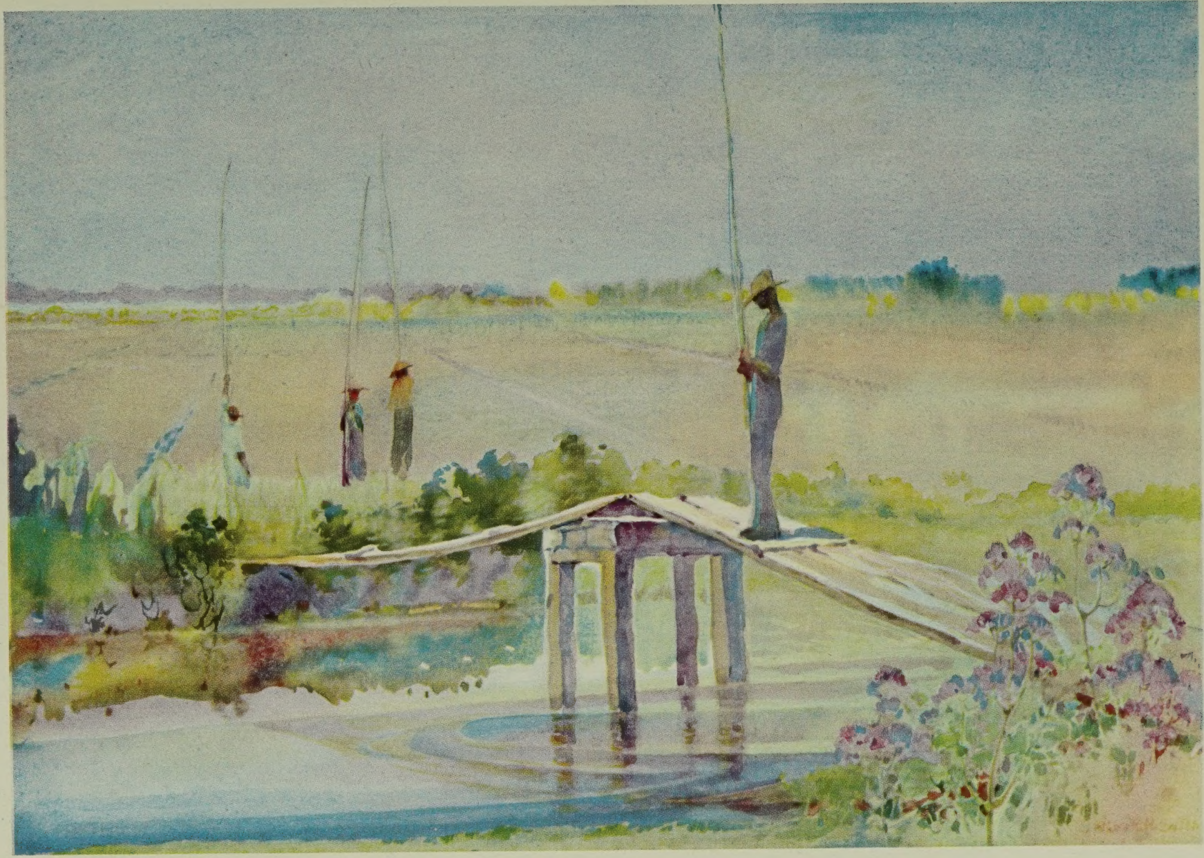

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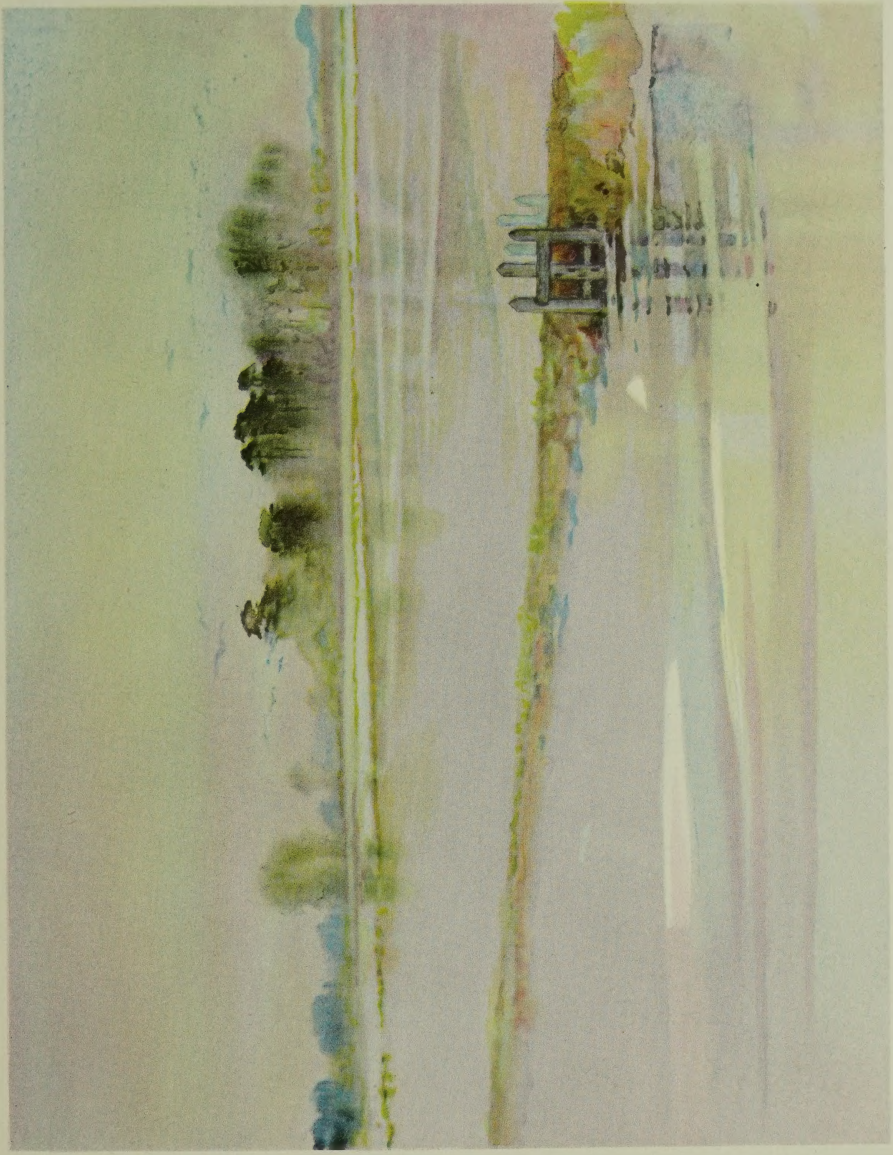

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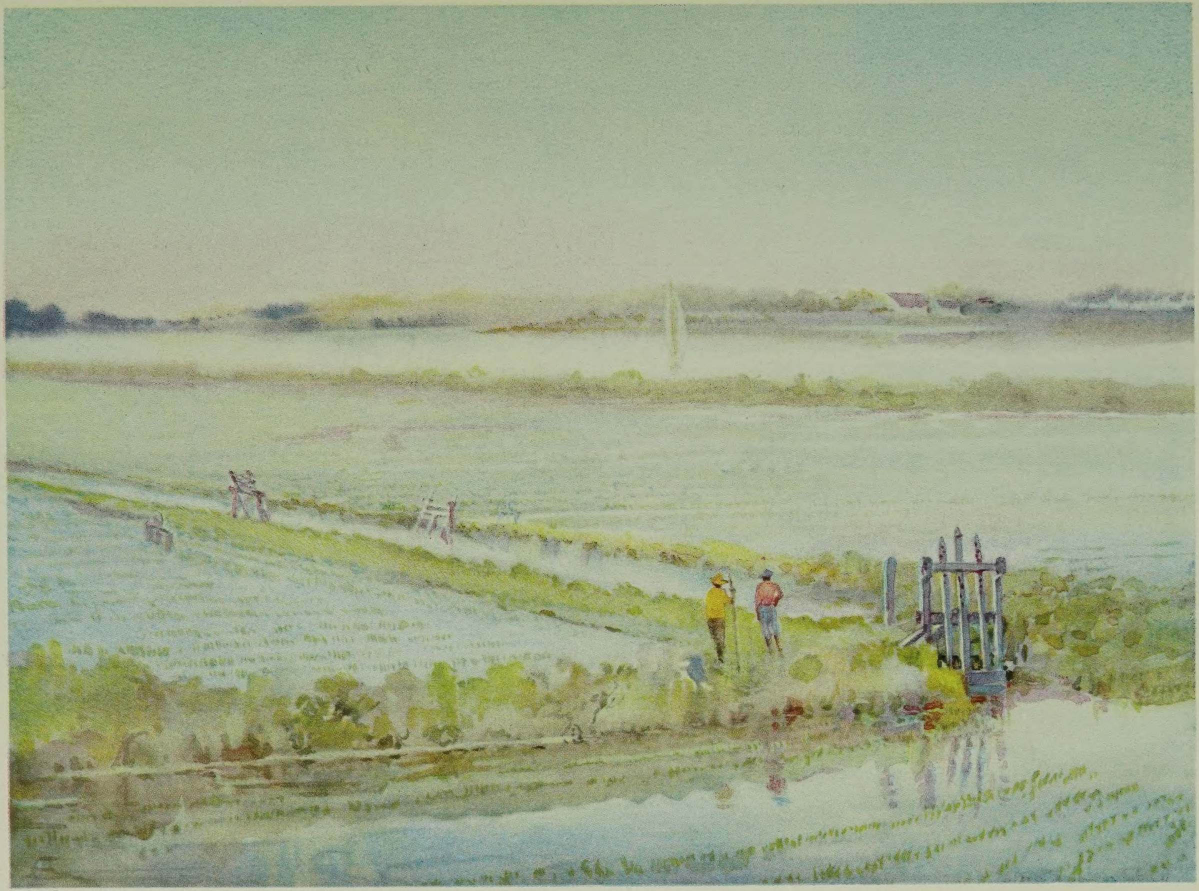

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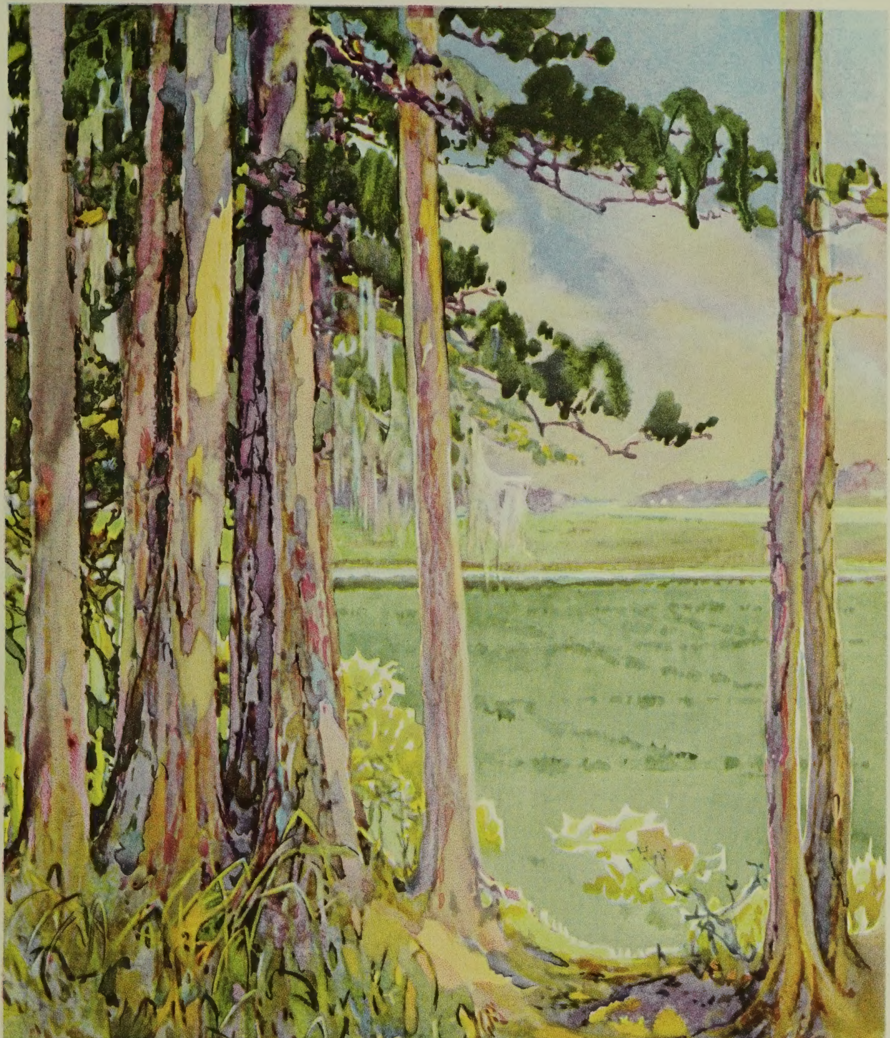

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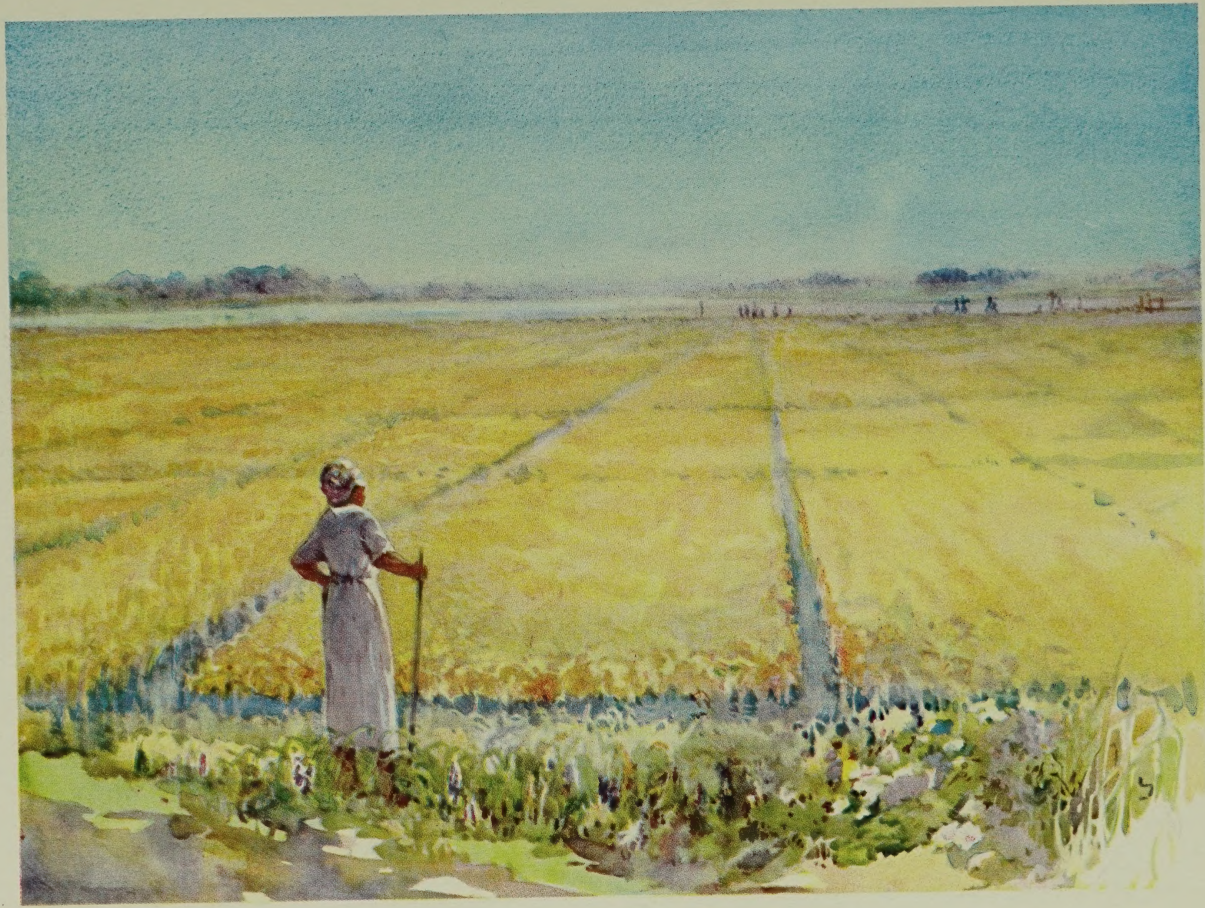

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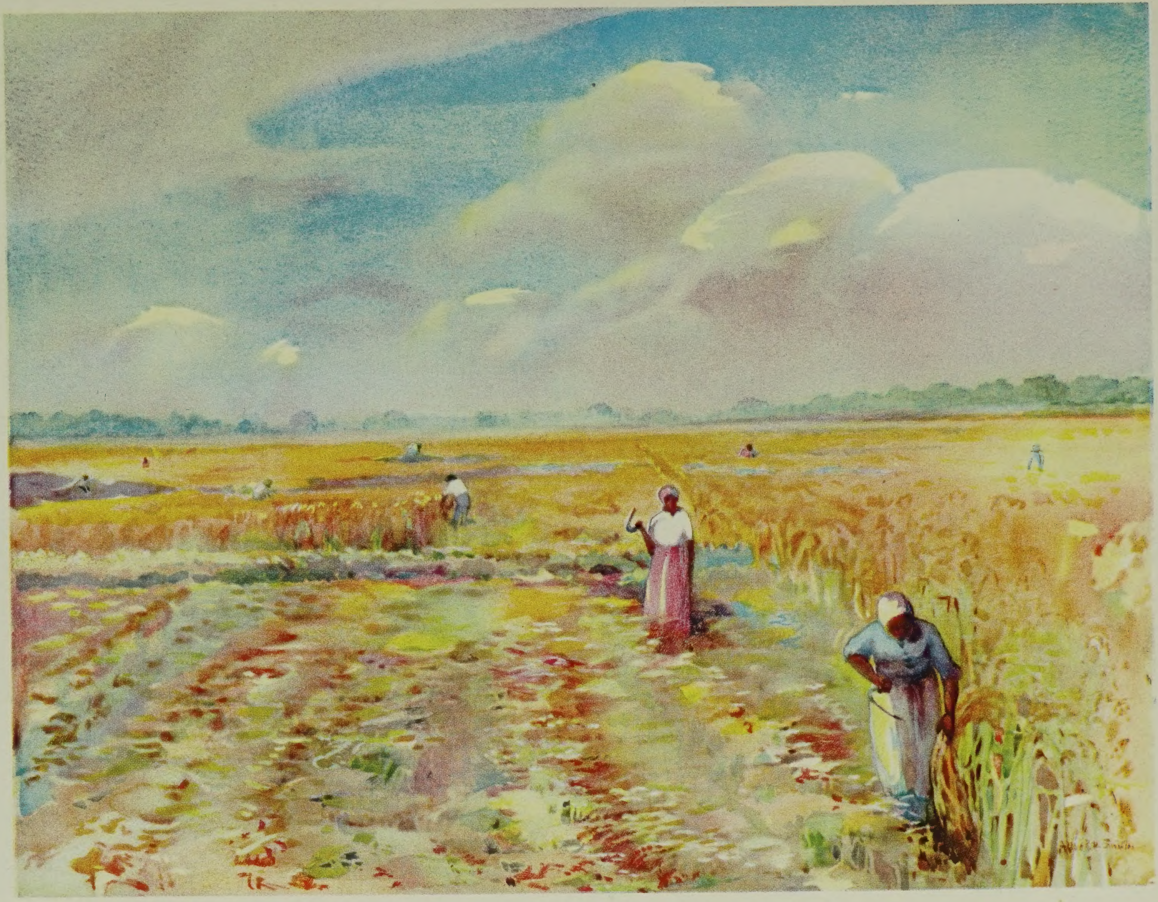

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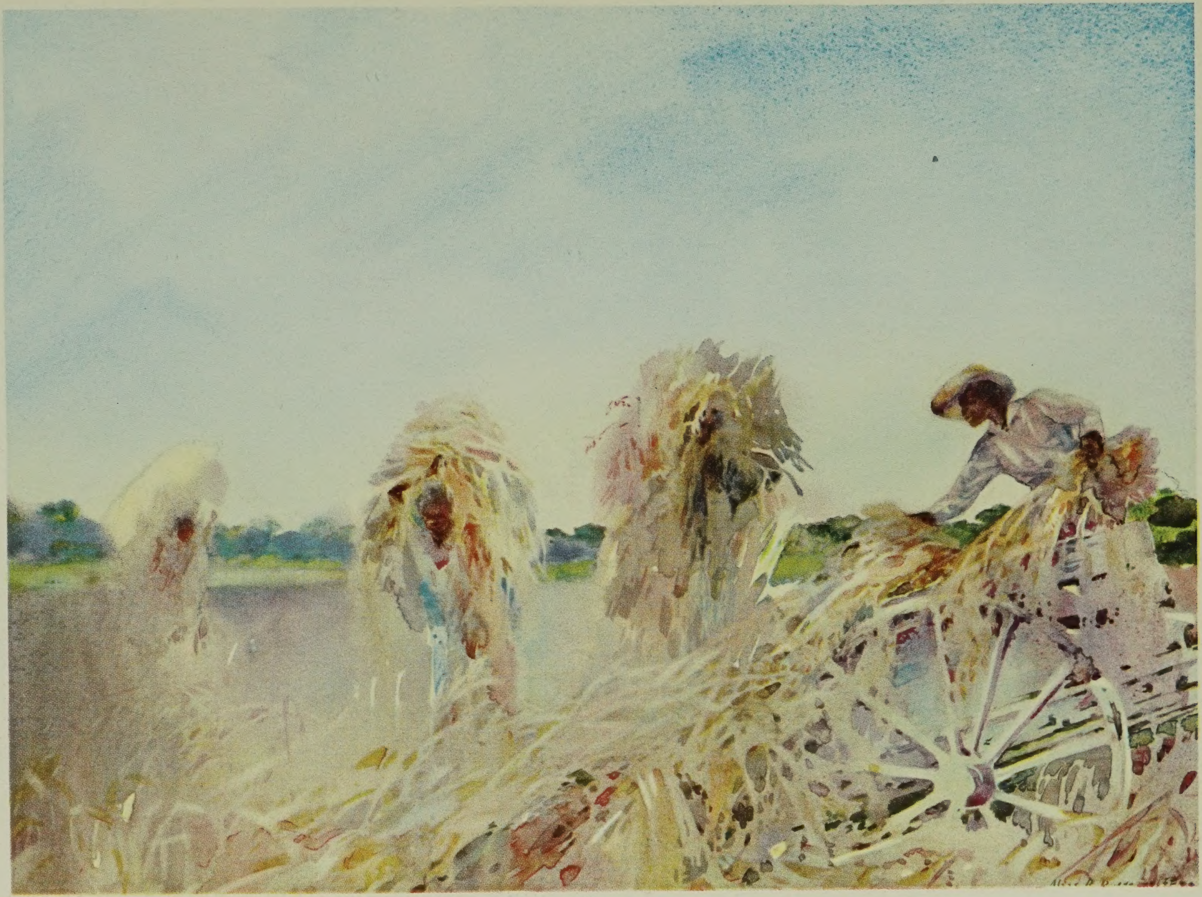

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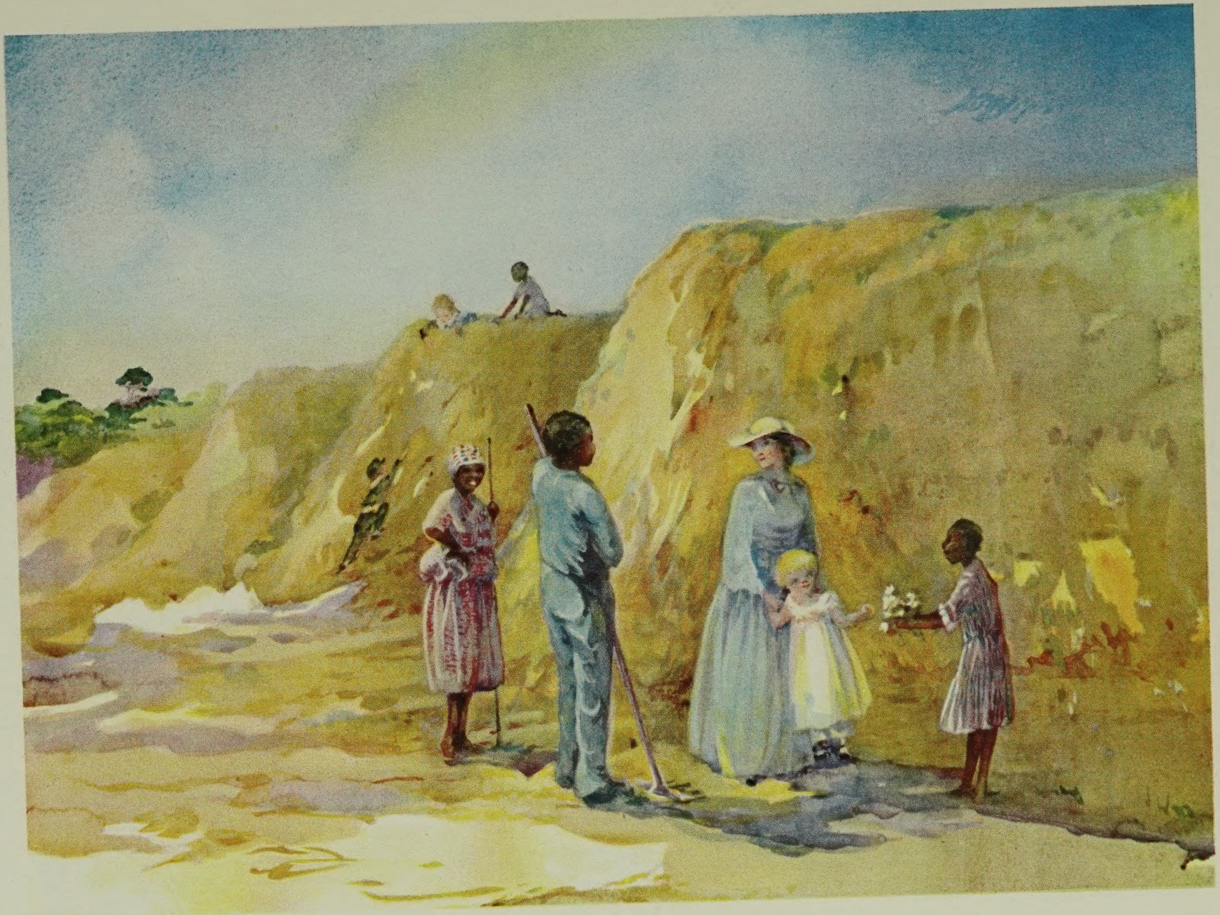
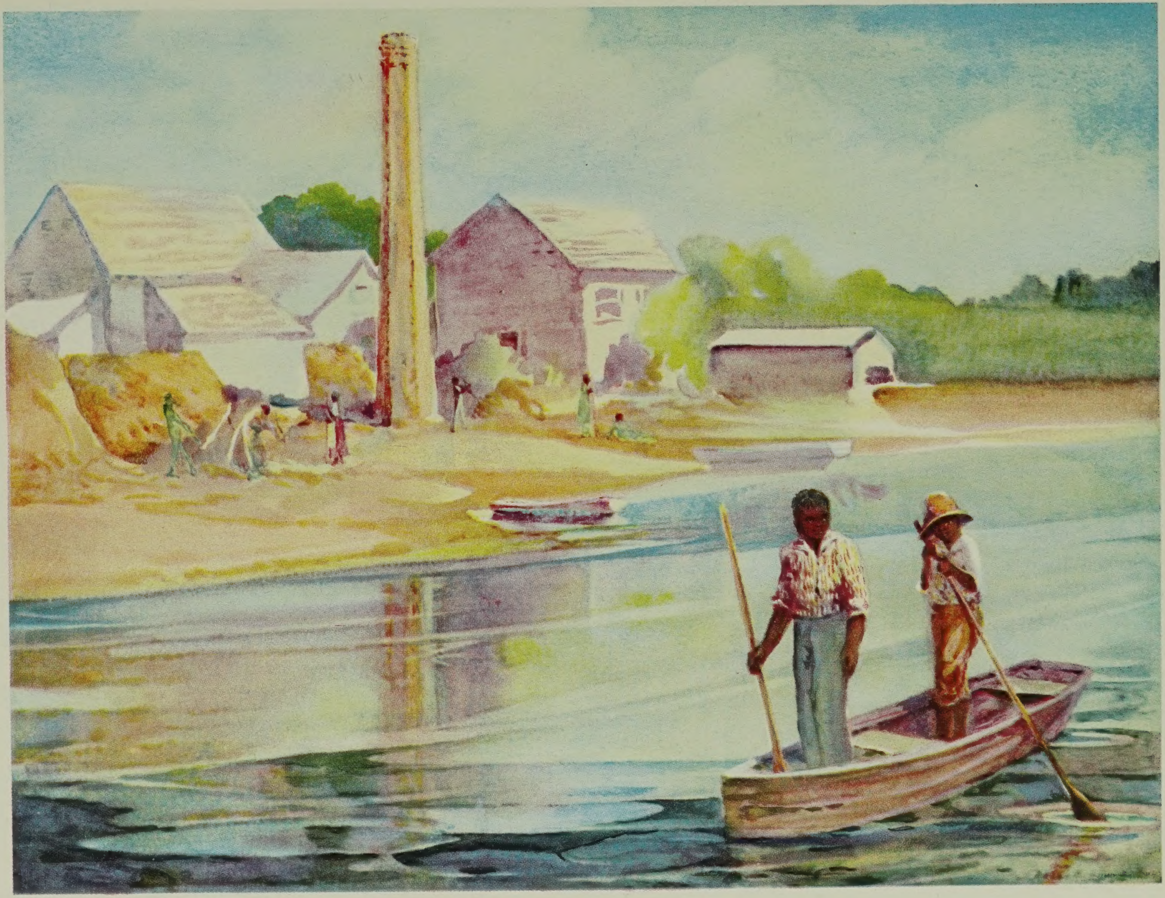
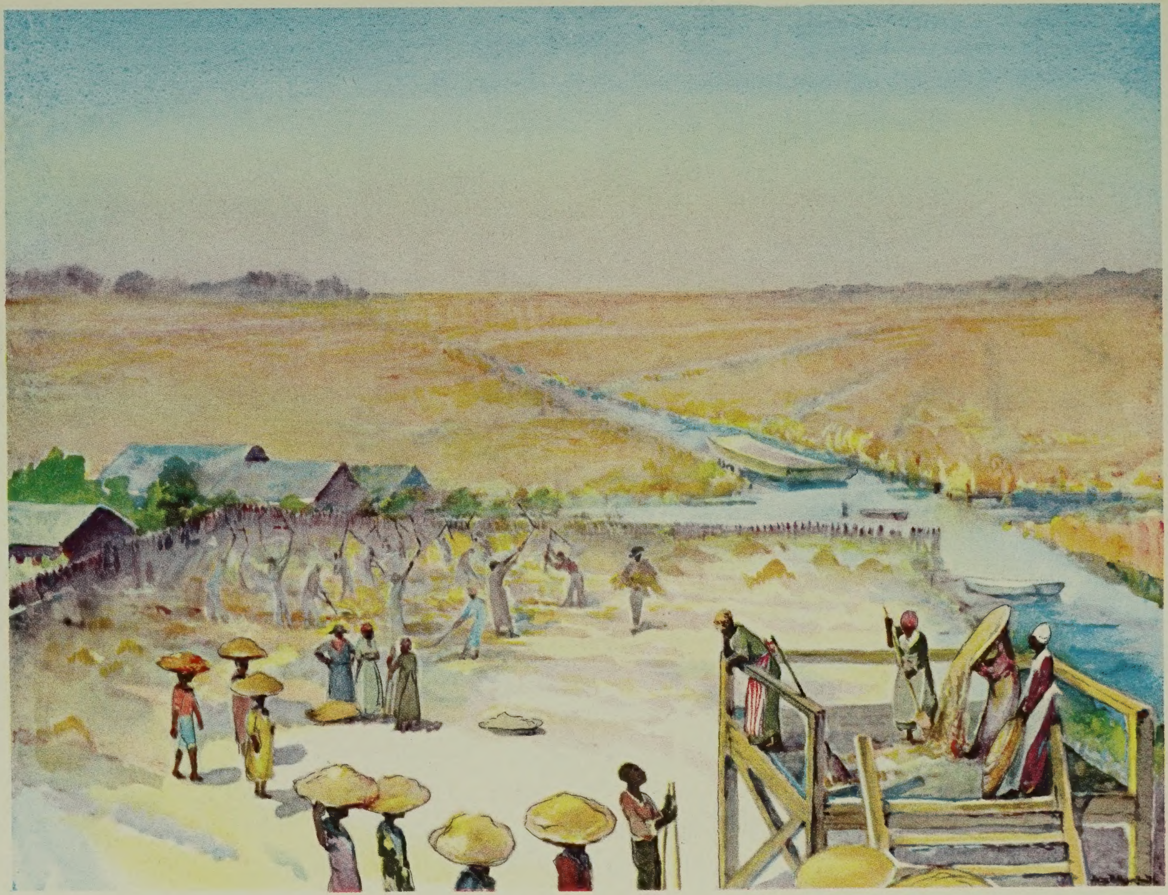


*The Mill and a Barn*



*The Threshing Floor with a Winnowing-House*



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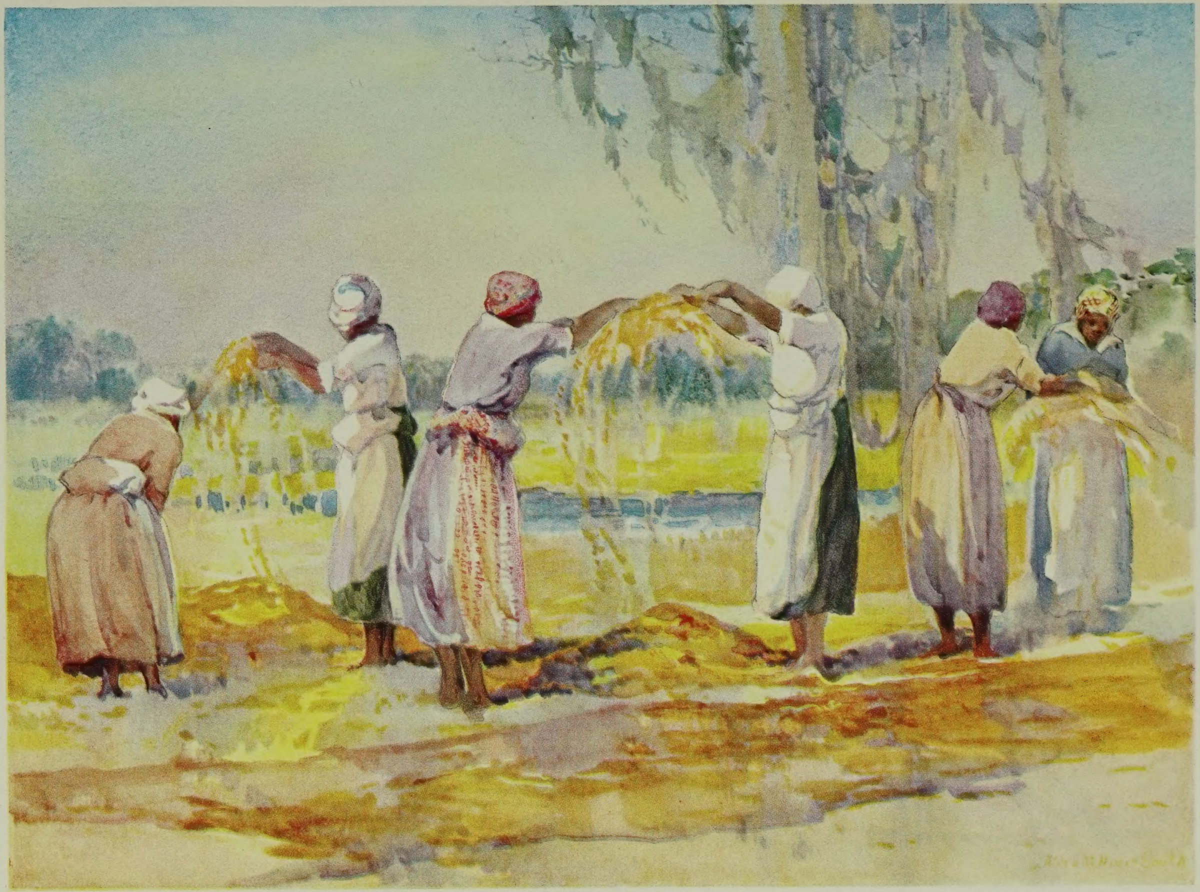

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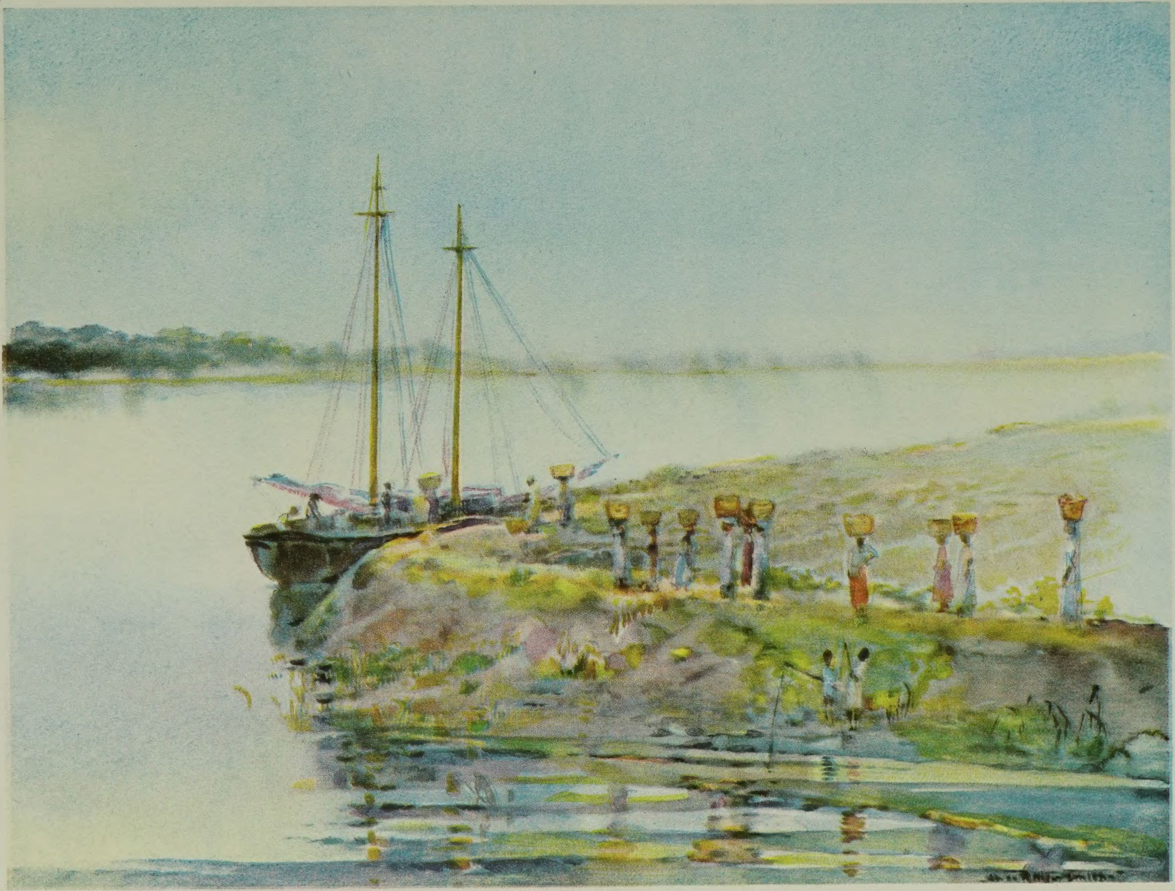

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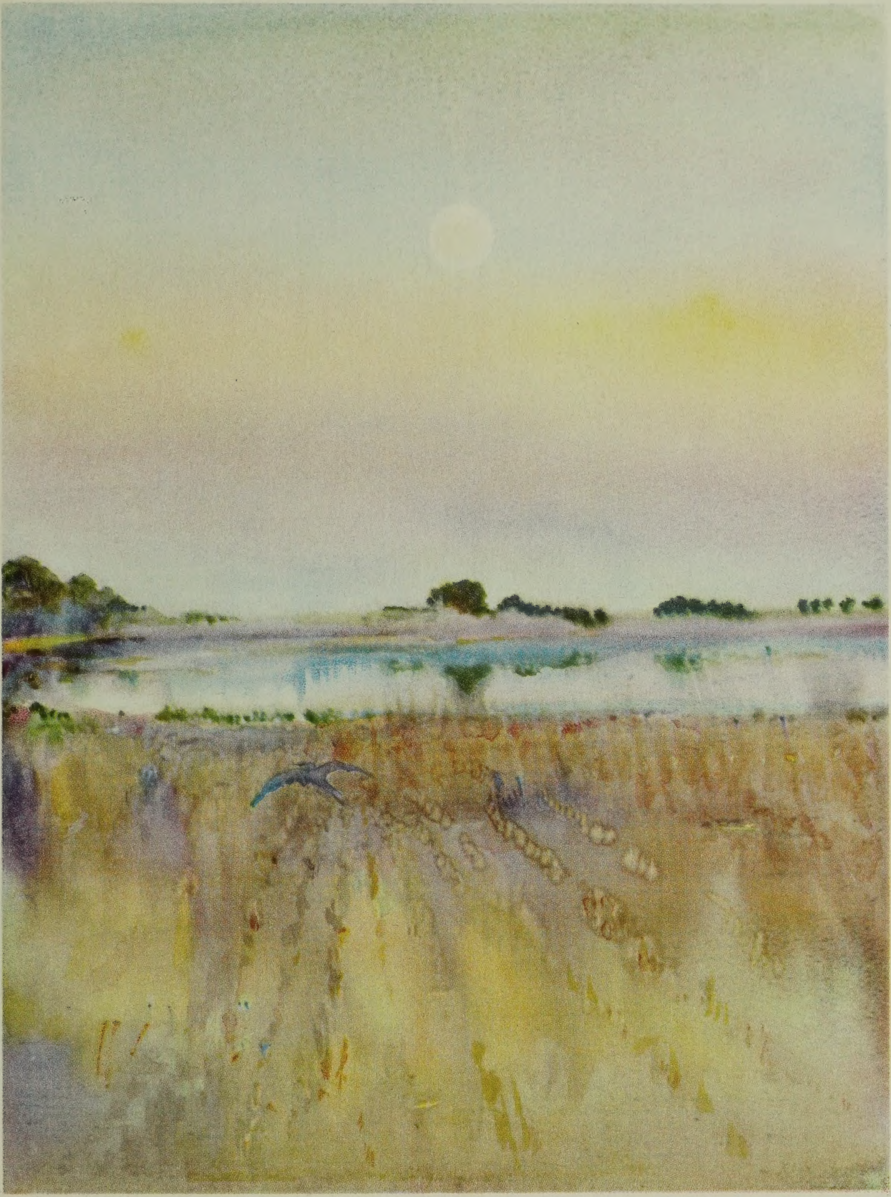

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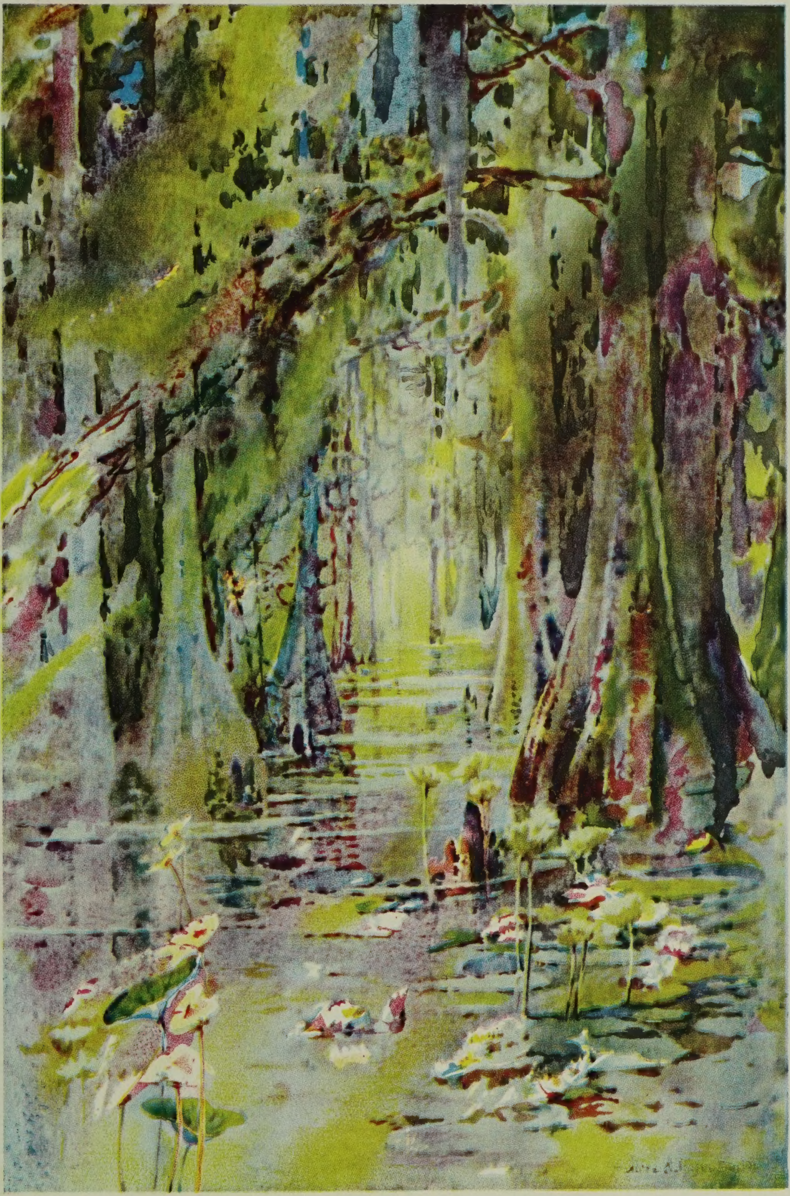

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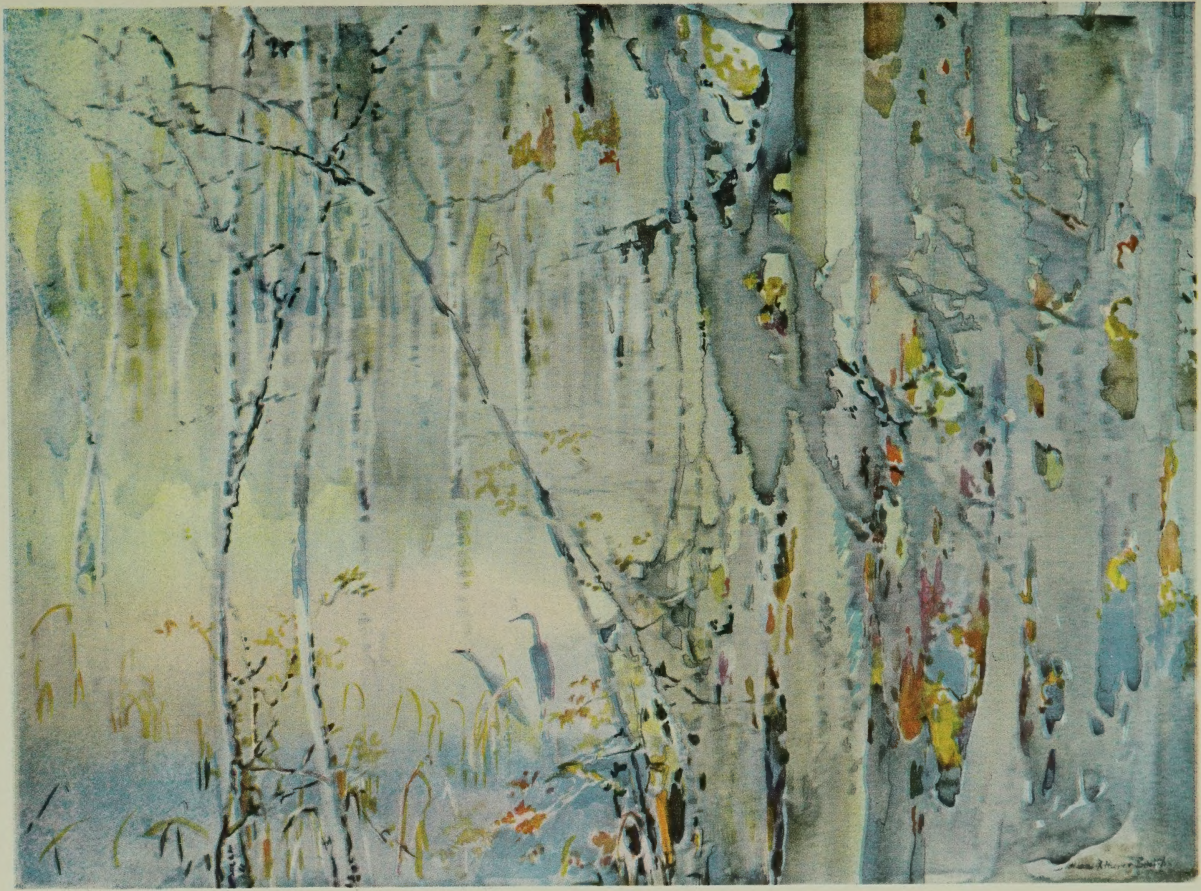

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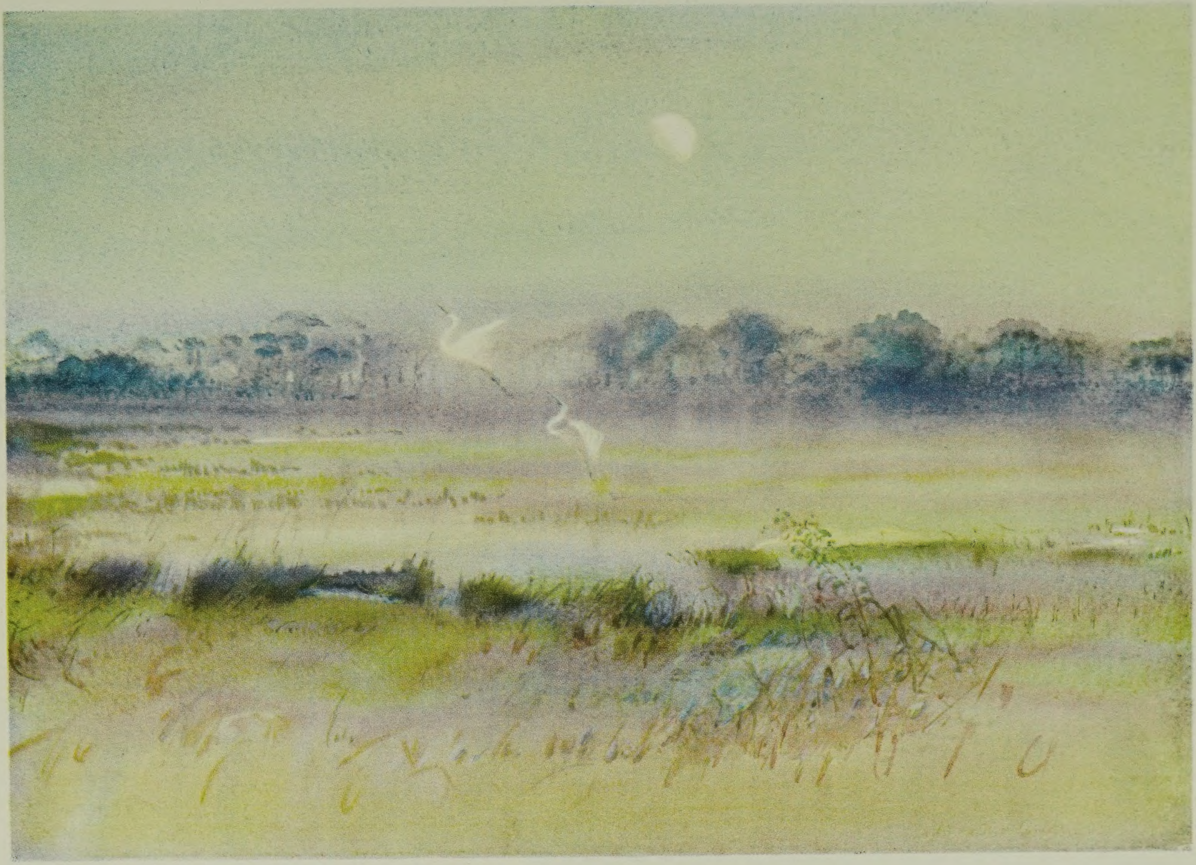

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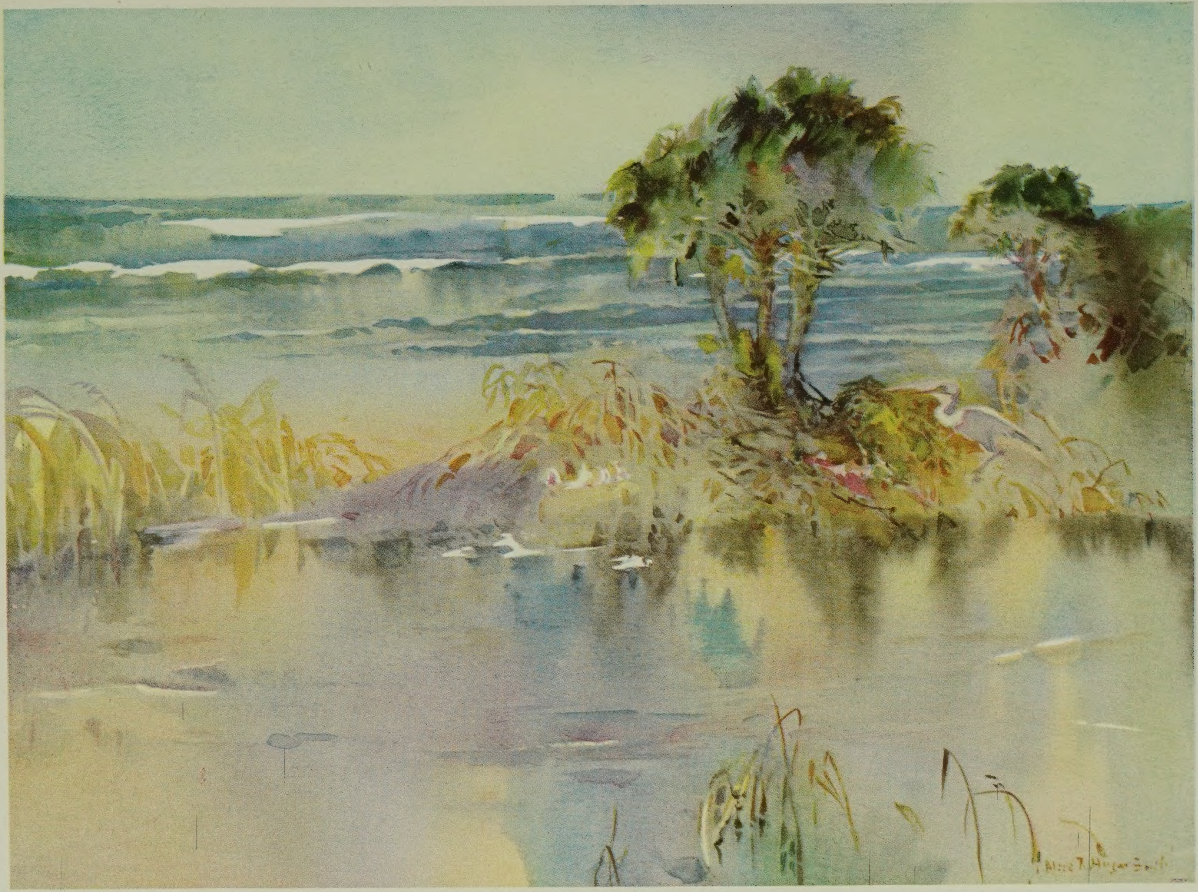

# THE RICE COAST

# THE RICE COAST: ITS STORY AND ITS MEANING

## I

"THE Gentlemen seated in the Country are very courteous, live very nobly in their Houses, and give very genteel Entertainment to Strangers and others that come to visit them." Thus wrote in the year 1709 John Lawson, a traveler in Carolina when the Province was in its infancy. It is one of the first clear glimpses that we have of the plantations of Carolina and it shows that even then, when most of America was an untamed wilderness, the civilization already developing in the rich lowlands near Charles Town had taken on the character which was to distinguish it through all its days. A century and a half later another traveler in the ante-bellum South, Frederick Law Olmsted of New York, came to a fork in the road he had been following.

"Here," he wrote, "the road divided, running each way at right angles; on one side to barns and a landing on the river, on the other toward the mansion of the proprietor. A negro boy opened the gate of the latter, and I entered.

"On either side, at fifty feet distant, were rows of old live-oak trees, their branches and twigs slightly hung with a delicate fringe of gray moss, and their dark, shining green foliage meeting and intermingling naturally but densely overhead. The sunlight streamed through and played aslant the lustrous leaves, and fluttering, pendulous moss; the arch was low and broad; the trunks were huge and gnarled, and there was a heavy groining of strong, rough, knotty branches. I stopped my horse and held my breath; for I have hardly in all my life seen anything so impressively grand and beautiful. I thought of old Kit North's rhapsody on trees; and it was no rhapsody—it was all here and real: 'Light, shade, shelter, coolness, freshness, music, dew, and dreams dropping through their umbrageous twilight—dropping direct, soft, sweet, soothing, and restorative from heaven.' "

Olmsted was no Southern enthusiast. In his "fault-finding book," as he himself described it, published in 1856, he was an outspoken critic of the Southern life and scene. On this occasion he had happened upon one of the stately live-oak avenues through which, on many of the Carolina rice plantations, the "Great House" was approached. The beauty of it took his breath; and yet perhaps he missed the deeper meaning.

These long cathedral naves of massive-trunked, wide-spreading, evergreen oaks, extending perhaps a quarter of a mile or more and forming a covered way to the plantation house at the avenue's end, still speak eloquently—for many of them survive—of the spirit which animated the founders of the Carolinian civilization. They were building not for the day or for the morrow but for their children's children. Thus the oak avenues, which only the long years could bring to perfection, are an expression of a steadfast faith as admirable as it was in one sense tragic; and in their simple and reticent dignity they are symbolical of that to which they led the wayfarer—the human life of the plantations, the generations of men and women who dwelt there. The great oaks which held Frederick Olmsted spell-bound may have been planted in John Lawson's day. It was in the 1850's that Olmsted saw them, in the fullness of that strength and beauty which those who planted them could only foresee. So, too, the life of the Carolina rice plantations, which began even before Lawson's time, came in the 1850's to its fullest flowering; and certain aspects of that life in its strong and fine maturity this book attempts to picture and in some sort interpret.

That it was strong and fine can not be doubted by those of us who had the good fortune to know personally some of the men and women it produced. That there was beauty in it is demonstrated by much that it created and left behind it as its tangible memorial. Under this beauty, we believe, was something else of lasting importance—something the true nature of which has often been obscured and the continuing value of which has not been grasped.

The South is being urged by many to forget its past, and the Southern artist or writer who ventures to look back at the South's past—unless, indeed, he look through the spectacles of the satirist or the muck-raker—runs the risk of being catalogued as a mere sentimentalist animated by nothing more virile than a "nostalgic yearning for the vanished glories of the plantation era." Though this criticism has a certain justification, it can be carried too far. There is a completely valid motive for looking back at the Carolinian civilization which reached its zenith in the 1850's.

Of all the widely different Souths of which the Old South was composed the South of the great Carolina plantations must be most interesting to the student of the deep and broad main-currents of our national life. In its culminating and most distinctive and most significant period (from about 1820 to 1861) the Old South's thought and action were shaped mainly by South Carolina, and to this leadership the rice plantation region, of which Charleston was the capital, contributed a vital part. Hence the "Rice Coast" was much more than a tract of territory; nor does the now familiar phrase, "a way of living," express it adequately. It was also a way of thinking; and whatever has happened to its physical body, the invisible essential part of it may, in some new adaptation to the new times that are upon us, assume a new vitality. Long regarded as having been in its great days the last stronghold of an obsolete Romanticism, the Rice Coast may, in the changed perspective of these new times, take on a totally different significance. It was in essence an attempt to re-create in America the classic Greek ideal of democracy, the ideal which produced the great civilizations of ancient Greece and Rome; and this attempt may come at last to be recognized as a memorable effort in behalf of Realism in social and political thought—an effort perhaps destined to become once more, through a revival of its essential philosophy, an important animating force in American life.

This surely is reason enough why nothing about it should be forgotten, why all that it was should be kept clear in record and in understanding; and this, no less than the beauty that was here, is why Alice Smith's paintings have a value perhaps transcending even their exquisite art. She has pictured, as no one else could, the physical aspect, and in a true sense the soul, of a region, a period, of extraordinary interest to the student of the past and perhaps also of significance to the future. It is my task to help tell in words the story that she has beautifully told in pictures—pictures which her father's memoirs, so admirably simple and straightforward, render all the more vivid—and to suggest the reasons why the story has seemed worth telling.

## II

In the Fundamental Constitutions, or "Grand Model," which John Locke, the philosopher, drew up for the Lords Proprietors of Carolina, a system of nobility was provided for in which the highest title—after the Proprietors themselves and their sons—was that of Landgrave carrying with it four baronies, or forty-eight thousand acres of land. The Grand Model with its ready-made aristocracy was impracticable in a new country which preferred to create for itself such grades of society as were to be developed. It never received the necessary approval of the people and it lasted no longer than, in fact not so long as, the rule of the Lords Proprietors which was ended by popular uprising in 1719; but it had a distinguishable and continuing effect upon the institutions and tone of the Province—some of the old Low Country baronies are still called baronies and are known by their original names. Of the old Landgraves the one whose name is most familiar to later generations was Thomas Smith, an able man, held "in high estimation for his wisdom and probity," governor of the Province in 1693-94, but known to most people today largely because of a legend about rice in which there appears to be only a modicum of truth.

According to this legend, for which the early historians Alexander Hewatt and David Ramsay were responsible, Landgrave Smith had visited Madagascar before settling in Carolina. In Madagascar, Ramsay affirms, Smith "observed that rice was planted and grew in low and moist ground. Having such ground at the western extremity of his garden attached to his dwelling house in East Bay-street (in Charles Town), he was persuaded that rice would grow therein if seed could be obtained. About this time a vessel from Madagascar, being in distress, came to anchor near Sullivan's Island (at the entrance of Charles Town harbor). The master of this vessel inquired for Mr. Smith as an old acquaintance. An interview took place. In the course of conversation Mr. Smith expressed a wish to obtain some seed-rice to plant in his garden by way of experiment. The cook being called said he had a small bag of rice suitable for that purpose. This was presented to Mr. Smith who sowed it in a low spot in his garden which now forms a part of Longitude Lane. It grew luxuriantly. The little crop was distributed by Mr. Smith among his planting friends."

"From this small beginning," Ramsay continues, "the first staple commodity of Carolina took its rise" and "soon after became the chief support of the colony." The legend is so widespread and was for a long while so generally accepted that it seems advisable to notice it here. What now appears to have been the real beginning of the Carolina rice plantations makes as dramatic a story as the legendary one and the principal actor in it is one of the most picturesque figures in American history.

Dr. Henry Woodward's name is little known today beyond the borders of Carolina, yet there are few names in the early annals of America more worthy of remembrance. His life was one of astonishing adventure. The progenitor of a notable line of Southern leaders, he was, as Verner W. Crane sums him up in "The Southern Frontier," the first English settler in South Carolina, the first interpreter and Indian Agent, the first Englishman to penetrate the Western wilderness—the pioneer, in a word, of English expansion in the lower South. When Captain Robert Sandford visited the Carolina coast in 1666, nearly four years before the planting of the first English settlement, Henry Woodward, then a young surgeon on Sandford's vessel, volunteered to remain alone with the Indians to learn their language and customs and prepare the way for the projected colony. This he did, the Indian Chief showing him every honour, placing him upon the official throne, bestowing upon him many gifts including a field of maize and the chief's own niece to "tend him and dress his victuals and be careful of him."

Woodward had been invested by Sandford with formal possession of the country to hold it as tenant-at-will of the Lords Proprietors until a settlement could be established. Thus, when his companions had sailed away, he was England, civilization, in the Southern American wilderness and it may be said that the seed of all that was to come was in young Henry Woodward, alone among the red men and probably more than a little doubtful at times whether he would ever see an English face again. Captured by the Spaniards and carried to their stronghold at St. Augustine, Woodward made his escape when the noted buccaneer, Robert Searle, raided the port. Thereafter he sailed the Caribbean as surgeon of a privateer until in August, 1669, a tropical hurricane cast him ashore at Nevis in the Leeward Islands.

By then the Lords Proprietors' expedition for the settlement of Carolina was on its way from England and through a fortunate chance one of the vessels was forced to stop at Nevis. Woodward joined the colonists, proceeded with them to Carolina, took part in the establishment of the colony on the Ashley River and entered upon another and equally adventurous phase of his career when, as an intrepid explorer of the inland wilderness, he blazed the westward path as far as the Chattahoochee and laid the foundation of English trade and influence in the old Southwest.

It is apparently with this remarkable man and not Landgrave Thomas Smith, that the story of the Carolina rice plantations may properly begin.* Though, even before the first settlement had been effected, the Lords Proprietors had been discussing the possibility of rice culture in the new domain which King Charles the Second had given them, and though some others may have experimented without important results, it seems to have been Henry Woodward who first successfully planted the seed, discovered that rice would grow and flourish in the new soil and thus started a train of events perhaps even more momentous than those which were to ensue from his more spectacular exploits.

It is an interesting circumstance that this development came to Carolina through the agency of a New Englander. Some years before 1686, in which year Dr. Woodward died, a New England brigantine put into Charles Town harbor. Captain John Thurber was her master and he was at the time the possessor of some gold seed rice which he had procured in Madagascar. From him Dr. Woodward obtained about a peck of the rice, planted the seed, had an excellent yield and in turn distributed the seed among other Carolinians.

It was the crop for which the virgin soil of Carolina had been waiting. So immediate was its success that by 1690 planters were asking that rice be specified as one of the commodities in which they might pay their quit rents; by 1691 Peter Jacob Guerard was petitioning the Assembly for protection against the unauthorized use of a rice-husking engine which he had invented; by 1700 the collector of customs was complaining that there were not ships enough in the Charles Town trade to carry away all the rice available for export. It was a profitable as well as a swiftly expanding industry, and it was probably one reason why those "Gentlemen seated in the Country," of whom John Lawson wrote in 1709, could live "so nobly in their Houses" and give such "genteel Entertainment" to strangers that chanced to visit them.

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*See "The introduction of Rice Culture into South Carolina"; Bulletin of the Historical Commission of South Carolina, No. 6, by A. S. Salley, Jr.

Thenceforward, in spite of difficulties and dangers including the depredations of Blackbeard, Stede Bonnet and other pirates and the hazards of the Indian wars one of which nearly destroyed the colony, the Carolina rice plantations, with Charles Town (soon to be Charlestown and still later Charleston) as their port and capital, increased steadily in numbers and importance. For many years, while the interior country was still a wilderness teeming with game, the trade in deerskins far exceded that in rice—in the twenty-three years prior to 1762 three and a half million deerskins were shipped from Charlestown. Cattle-raising, too, was an important industry; the exports of lumber and naval stores were helpful; there was in the early years a regrettable traffic in Indian slaves, the best markets for which were the West Indies and New England.

Starting almost or quite as early as rice culture, the culture of indigo, assisted by a bounty established by Parliament, swiftly assumed great proportions. By the middle of the eighteenth century, as a result of the success of rice and indigo (cotton culture was just beginning) the plantation system was firmly established. This, the first Golden Age of the rice plantations, witnessed the building of many handsome country houses and the development of many fine estates. When the Revolution came the South Carolina Low Country was probably the most prosperous area on the continent, while its capital, Charlestown, was "in every respect the most eminent and by far the richest city" in the South—so "eminent," in fact, that Josiah Quincy of Boston was moved to write in his diary that "in grandeur, splendour of buildings, decorations, equipages, numbers, commerce, shipping, and indeed in almost everything, it far surpasses all I ever saw, or ever expect to see, in America."

The war with the mother country, terminating the British bounty, and the competition of the East Indies, helped to put an end to indigo, cotton taking its place, gradually extending its sway over the whole State, and reaching its highest perfection on the coast islands near Charleston which were unsuitable for rice but upon which were to be developed great long-staple cotton plantations rivaling the finest rice places on the rivers. Recovering from the devastation of the Revolution, rice planting not only continued but expanded greatly through all tide-water Carolina except the islands, entering in the post-Revolutionary period upon its second Golden Age of agricultural achievement, economic importance and political power, until in the years between 1850 and 1860 its zenith was reached. The facile claim that it would have declined in any case from this time forward finds little support in the fact that the last decade of its existence, before the fatal war which was to blast it, was probably the most successful of all. The Compendium of the Seventh U. S. Census in 1850 numbered the plantations producing annually twenty thousand pounds of rice and over at four hundred and forty-six in South Carolina, eighty in Georgia and twenty-five in North Carolina, practically all of these, of course, being confined to the tide-water region where alone rice in large quantities could be grown. In that year the Carolina plantations produced 159,930,613 pounds of rice the value of which was well over six million dollars—a great sum in those days.

Thus by the 1850's the peck of seed rice sowed by Henry Woodward had borne impressive fruit. The wilderness baronies bestowed by the Lords Proprietors of Carolina on the early Landgraves had become perhaps the most flourishing agricultural region in America. The "Gentlemen seated in the Country," most of them in beautiful situations on the banks of the many rivers that come down across the Low Country to the sea, had lost nothing in courtesy or in hospitality since John Lawson's day. Generally of English or French Huguenot blood, some were of more or less distinguished ancestry in the old country. Most of them, however, were of unpretentious though respectable origin; and if by the 1850's they constituted a Carolinian aristocracy celebrated enough to be heard of even beyond the Atlantic, it was perhaps the most democratic aristocracy as yet known, based as it was upon character and achievement, with a code of conduct as well as of manners, and notably willing (an essential point, to be elaborated later) to accept recruits who had proved themselves worthy of honour and trust.

With their many mansions looking out over the slow winding Low Country rivers, their spacious grounds and their carefully tended gardens, their stately live-oak avenues of which the avenue that enthralled Frederick Olmsted was only one among many, their well cultivated fields exemplifying the most skilful and the most successful agriculture of their day, they believed—and they were not far wrong—that they lived in one of the loveliest lands under the sun.

It was a land which they and their fathers had made what it was and they loved it with an extraordinary and passionate devotion. So, too, they loved Charleston, the city which was a second home to most of them, which owed its being and its individuality mainly to them, and to which in turn they owed a certain urbanity of social intercourse not commonly characteristic of the agrarian philosophy and life. The Carolina rice planters, even Olmsted admitted readily, had "less vulgar display and more intrinsic elegance than any distinct class among us"; and Francis Pendleton Gaines, in his searching comparison of plantation tradition with plantation actuality, found that in the rice country an order of life undoubtedly existed which approximated in real social charm the traditional charm of the romances—"an ease, a grace, a cordiality, hardly to be matched in any American society, equal to, in fact, the most cultured circles of old European countries."

More important, they were kind. Among the largest slave-holders in the South, they sustained with credit a responsibility which it is staggering even to contemplate today and proved that, whatever it must be in theory, in practice slavery could be a very kindly thing. They exalted their women in accord with an ancient ideal and they believed, with good reason, that, in respect to the qualities which they valued, their women were the equals of any on earth. They were individualists, they managed their own affairs, they upheld tenaciously their State's right to manage hers. They were the foremost champions of local self-government, a principle which they conceived to be the very cornerstone of civil liberty, and vital to the continuance of the Union. In their early days they had played their full part in the founding of the Republic. In their maturity they re-created and developed a form of democracy which may yet come to be considered, in its essential tenets, the best attainable compromise between public security and private freedom. Before the end came they had begun to create a literature, and, their city, Charleston, had produced (a fact generally overlooked by those who assert that the South was hopelessly romantic) the most notable realist in American fiction up to that time—William Gilmore Simms.

They clung to certain old ways, believing them good, not from an innate lack of enterprise but because they were an agricultural society and therefore no irresistible industrial revolution forced upon them keen personal rivalry and professional competition as the price of success. There were exceptions, of course—there were loose livers and weaklings and worse among them, as among all men—but in general they were an honourable, clean-living, hard-working, God-fearing people, devoted to their homes though many of them knew the capitals of Europe, simple in their tastes, generous in their aims, hopeful in their outlook though more than a few foresaw the disaster which in the Fifties was so near at hand. With all their polite accomplishment, their appreciation of the arts, their sound perception of beauty as evidenced by the houses they built, their success in their two characteristic vocations—agriculture and statecraft—doubtless it is true, as one of them wrote, that "intellectually they were not above the average of sensible men." Yet, mainly because of the circumstances in which they were placed, they came to represent something, a way of thought as well as a way of life, which lifts their story well above the average of both historic interest and contemporary significance.

Obviously their full story can not be told in short space. Only certain aspects of what the Carolina plantations were and did and meant can be touched on here. Of these, that which is treated at some length in Chapter X is today the most important because the Carolinian effort to establish realistic democracy in America is of practical and living interest today.

# III

The "rice rivers" were eleven in number. From north to south they were the Waccamaw, the Pee Dee, the Black, the Sampit, the Santee, the Cooper, the Ashley, the Edisto, the Ashepoo, the Combahee, the Savannah. On the tidewater of these rivers most of the rice planters were "seated," and the river was their friend and sometimes their foe so that the planter knew his river and most of the time loved it as he knew and loved the ancient oaks shading the plantation yard. From the river his fields drew their life; from it, in time of freshet or storm, devastation and ruin might come. Hence he had to know all its whims and caprices; its capacity for good, its power for harm.

"Sailing up one of those fruitful rivers," wrote Governor R. F. W. Allston, himself a great rice planter, in 1854, "the traveler may now behold many miles of serpentine embankment (continuous save where a water thoroughfare occurs) enclosing thousands of acres, checked into fields, which bear in waving luxuriance crops of this translucent grain." He might have beheld, too,–if the stage of the crop was one which required their presence–hundreds of black men and women working in those fields, working cheerfully and not too strenuously at tasks which would be completed by early afternoon (from one to four o'clock), leaving them the rest of the day for their own concerns.

From end to end of the rice plantation country, roughly a rectangle about one hundred and fifty miles long by forty or fifty miles wide, the picture varied only in details of its setting of rice fields, forest and river. In these details, however, it varied endlessly, so that in spite of the flatness of the landscape there was no monotony. An essential, in fact the central, feature of it was always the plantation house, placed usually upon some slight rise of the ground–for the Low Country is not utterly flat and along the rivers there are some fairly bold bluffs–whence a wide prospect of water and rice fields might be viewed.

The house stood as a rule among trees, some of them probably the original forest growth, others planted around the house-site in the colony's early days. Live-oaks and magnolias were the favorites, two of the noblest American species, which here attain magnificent proportions; the "burly-barked, man-bodied" live-oaks, as Sidney Lanier called them, stretching their massive limbs, as large as the trunks of ordinary trees, perhaps fifty feet from the enormous gnarled trunk; the magnolias towering straight upward, clothed at all seasons in their large, lustrous, dark-green leaves and especially beautiful in late spring and early summer with their superb ivory-white blooms.

Besides these trees around the house and in the plantation yard, there was often, though not invariably, the avenue, lined with live-oaks, usually of great size, through which the carriages of visitors approached the house from the main-road beyond the gate. The avenue, generally formed by single rows of oaks on each side, occasionally by double rows, was likely to be the most impressive feature of the place, and it was hard to say which was more beautiful—the view of river and rice fields from the piazza fronting the river, or the view from the landward piazza whence one looked straight down the long wide aisle of the avenue, a shadowy, colonnaded, high-ceilinged vista, festooned and tapestried with Spanish moss.

The approach was not always so stately; the house-groves, the plantation yards, the gardens differed in scale and effect and arrangement; most of the rice plantation places were pleasing to the eye, many were beautiful, a lesser number could claim a certain grandeur. This was true also of the houses themselves.

Some, like Newington and Drayton Hall on the Ashley, were large and imposing mansions modelled in some cases, it is said, after ancestral manors in England; others, perhaps not less spacious and often handsomely panelled, like Harrietta and Hampton on Santee and Dean Hall on the Cooper, were of cypress or heart-pine upon high brick foundations or basements; still others, including most of the very oldest built when the Low Country was a wilderness, were houses of small or moderate size, with no pretension to elegance or luxury. Large or small, simple or elaborate, they were nearly always houses of excellent workmanship and genuine dignity; and here, too, monotony was escaped, for the homes of the rice planters were of widely varying designs, the classic type with its columns being not nearly so general as is commonly supposed.

Similarly, there were degrees of elaborateness in the interior furnishings which ranged from comfortable simplicity to something approaching or achieving sumptuousness.

In the larger houses there was much fine furniture, a great deal of handsome silverware, in many cases an impressive array of family portraits on the panelled walls. There were excellent libraries too—as might be expected in houses many of whose young men had been educated in Europe, while others had attended the best American institutions of learning, and whose women were, as Olmsted himself frankly declared, "unexcelled for every quality which commands respect, admiration and love." In short, varying widely as they did in accord with the wealth and personal tastes of master and mistress, the homes of the rice planters were as a group the homes of a prosperous, happy and liberal people, who, as Thomas R. Waring has expressed it in his admirable essay on Charleston, respected scholarship, patronized the arts and cultivated manners and who drew upon literature, music and painting for a way of life—"perhaps . . . the greatest of the arts, as it is the only one whose prime objective is human happiness."

A fairly typical "mansion"—neither so large as "stately Newington," which is said to have had a hundred windows on its front, nor so simple as ancient Medway where Landgrave Thomas Smith lies buried—was Cedar Grove on the Ashley River, built probably between 1740 and 1750. Of the "seated rivers" the Ashley, because it was short and often salt, was least useful as a rice river, but this disadvantage was partly offset by easy accessibility from Charleston so that many planters established seats on the Ashley's banks. In 1857 Richard Yeadon, a Charleston litterateur and journalist, wrote a long and detailed if somewhat flowery account of Cedar Grove house and grounds. This was printed at the time in the Charleston Courier and is worth preserving in condensed form.

"The fine old residence," the writer begins, "worthy of our Colonial nobility or aristocracy, at which I am temporarily tabernacling, is a noble and capacious brick mansion of two stories, on a high basement, with an attic besides, its walls wainscoted and paintings let into the wainscoting." The house, we learn, had two fronts and its four corners denoted the cardinal points of the compass. The southwestern front, with a spacious piazza entered by a flight of iron-railed stone steps, faced the river which flowed at a distance of some two hundred yards; the eastern front faced a fine avenue leading to the Charleston-Dorchester public road about three quarters of a mile distant.

On the first floor, facing the avenue, "the great hall," with a chimney place "as wide as a church door," and "as deep as a well," ensconced almost in the western corner, occupied a central position. The high mantelpiece was composed of various and variegated marbles; over it was set in the wainscoting a pictorial representation of an old Roman arch and other ancient ruins, with monks reading or at their devotions. This picture was enclosed in richly carved frame-work, florally decorated and capped in the centre with a female bust, "handsomely draped and bejewelled with necklace and broach or breast ornament of some kind."

On the opposite side of the room was a handsome mirror attached centrally, also in richly carved frame wood-work of wreath and flowers, supported at the base by a floral urn and crowned with a floral basket. The hall was lighted by means of a double-barred and partly-sashed door at the front entrance and a large window on each side; also by arched sash-lights over the back door and a false door alongside the real door.

On the northwestern side of the hall, a door in the northern corner opened into a small apartment, with a fireplace, used as a library, and occasionally as a bedroom when the house overflowed with excessive hospitality. On the other side was a large chamber, also with fireplace, and with dressing room and wardrobe, having a door opening from the apartment and another opening into the dining room.

From the "noble hall" a wide passage-way led to the southwestern piazza, fronting the river. On the right of this passage-way, was a room, with fireplace, used as a pantry, but suitable for any other domestic use, and further on, a door opened on a stairway, leading down into the offices and kitchen below—an unusual arrangement, the kitchen occupying on most plantations a separate building. On the left another door opened into the dining room which was well lighted by means of four large windows. The dining room had, of course, a comfortable fireplace, with gray marble mantlepiece, over which was let into the wainscoting a scene of shepherd or country life in the midst of romantic mountain and river landscape with a pillared Greek or Roman temple in the background. Fronting the chimney place, in the centre of the southwestern wall, a handsome bouffet or cupboard, with a two-leafed door in the form of an arch, was let into the wainscoting.

On the second floor, up an easy flight of "mahogany-railed and bannistered stairs, were four spacious, well lighted and airy bed-chambers, two on each side, separated by an unusually wide passage-way, all with fireplaces and each furnished with a dressing room, large enough for a child's dormitory."

The grounds about Cedar Grove house are described as very beautiful, though at an earlier period, when the place was a seat of the prominent Izard family, they had been even finer.

"A noble campus or greensward," Yeadon wrote, "stretched out in front of the mansion toward the avenue, and yet does so, and a beautiful flower garden and bower of floral and ornamental trees bloomed at the sides and on the river front; and in the southern border of the grounds there is yet a beautiful mall or walk between a double row of the noblest live-oaks, with occasional magnolias, uniting their kingly and queenly coronals, and at its extremity an artificial mound, now crowned with several well grown forest trees, as well as with woodbine and other jewels of the forest flora, from which is enjoyed a fine and extensive view of river and forest scenery, including that of the river plantations in the vicinity. Handsome hexagonal stone posts, with connecting iron chains or loops, enclosed portions of the campus and lined a part of the carriage way to the house, and also the garden walks; and leaden statuary, representing Venus and other mythological divinities, were dispersed about the garden and grounds."

Equally or even more elaborate were the grounds of Crowfield Plantation near Goose Creek, a tributary of the Cooper River. In a letter to a friend in England, written about 1744 and reproduced in Mrs. St. Julien Ravenel's biography of Eliza Lucas, the latter relates that she had been taken on "a most agreeable tour to Goose Creek, St. John's, . . . in which are several very handsome Gentleman's seats, at all of which we were entertained with the most friendly politeness. The first we arrived at was Mr. William Middleton's 'Crowfield' where we spent a most agreeable week.

"The house stands a mile from, but in sight of the road, and makes a very handsome appearance; as you draw near it new beauties discover themselves; first the fruitful vine mantleing the wall, loaded with delicious clusters. Next a spacious Basin in the midst of a large Green presents itself as you enter the gate that leads to the House which is neatly finished, the rooms well contrived and Elegantly furnished.

"From the back door is a spacious walk a thousand feet long; each side of which nearest the house is a grass plat ornamented in a Serpentine manner with Flowers; next to that on the right hand is what immediately struck my rural taste, a thicket of young, tall live-oaks where a variety of airey Chorristers pour forth their melody, and my darling the mocking bird joyn'd in the artless Concert and inchanted me with his harmony. Opposite on the left hand is a large square boling green, sunk a little below the level of the rest of the garden, with a walk quite round composed of a double row of fine large flowering Laurel (magnolia) and Catalpas which afford both shade and beauty.

"My letter will be of an unreasonable length if I don't pass over the Mounts, wilderness, etc., and come to the bottom of this charming spot where is a large fish pond with a mount rising out of the middle the top of which is level with the dwelling House, and upon it is a roman temple, on each side of this are other large fish ponds properly disposed which form a fine Prospect of water from the house. Beyond this are the smiling fields dressed in vivid green; here Ceres and Pomona joyn hand in hand to crown the hospitable board . . . I am quite tired of writing as I sopose you are of reading and can't say a word of the other seats I saw in this ramble except the Counts large double row of Oaks, on each side of the Avenue which leads to the House, and seems designed by Nature for pious meditation and friendly converse."

"A passion for flowers has of late astonishingly increased," observed the historian Ramsay in 1809. "Many families in the capital (Charleston) and several in the country for some years past have been uncommonly attentive to flower gardens." By the 1850's the "several in the country" had in their turn greatly increased.

"One who was still under fifteen when South Carolina seceded from the Union," Alice Smith wrote in an article on plantation gardens, "has vivid recollections of the plantations of relatives and friends which he visited before that date. All of them had gardens of one sort or another and most of these were well laid out and well kept. The general type was rather that of a shrubbery than an open garden, though generally at some point there were beds of roses, bulbs and annuals. The shrubbery portions were traversed by wide walks or allees, through the trees, many of them flowering: japonicas, lilacs, Cape jessamine, spirea, wild orange, holly, sweet olive, strawberry shrub, fringe trees, oppoponax, oaks, cedars, magnolias, sweet bay and many others, some indigenous and some imported. The boundary of the garden would frequently be marked with running roses such as Lady Banksia and the Cherokee rose or with hedges of China briar, jessamine, cassena, or Spanish bayonet. Memory brings back an occasional garden broken up with formal hedges of box or cassena or privet, kept carefully trimmed. One such remains in mind as an humble imitation of the famous maze at Hampton Court."

Thus the men and women of the plantations drew not only upon the arts for the "way of life" which they had created and found good; they drew also upon the natural beauty around them and improved the opportunity afforded by a long growing season to enhance the attractions of the places where they lived.

In general the gardens were pretty rather than magnificent, but in other cases, such as the Hermitage on the Savannah, Dean Hall on the Cooper, Belle Isle, Prospect Hill and Brookgreen in the Georgetown regions, a master or mistress's love of beauty made use of the plantation's large resources of labour to achieve notable results. Ramsay mentions among others of his day the Draytons of Ashley River whose garden, he says, "is arranged with exquisite taste and contains an extensive collection of trees, shrubs and flowers which are natives of the country," besides many valuable exotics, the whole making "an elegant and concentrated display of the native botanic riches of Carolina." The Williamson garden in St. Paul's district, he continues, "contains twenty-six acres, six of which are in sheets of water . . . ten acres in pleasure grounds, walks and banks . . . The pleasure grounds are planted with every species of flowering trees, shrubs and flowers that this and the neighboring states can furnish."

The Drayton place to which Ramsay refers was evidently Drayton Hall. "We stopped to dine with Dr. Drayton, at Drayton-Hall," wrote the Duke de la Rochefoucault-Liancourt describing his visit to Carolina in 1796. "The house is an ancient building but convenient and good; and the garden is better laid out, better cultivated and stocked with good trees, than any I have hitherto seen." The house, one of the finest in the Low Country, still stands, the sole survivor of the many fine houses which formerly lined the Ashley's banks and all except three of which were burned by the invading forces in the last days of the Confederate War. Farther up the river was another Drayton plantation, Magnolia, where was developed, chiefly by the Rev. John Grimke Drayton to whom it descended in 1825, a garden still so magnificent today that John Galsworthy, a man not given to exaggeration, declared it "the most beautiful spot in the world." The old house has gone, but the garden, of unbelievable splendor when its masses of azaleas and camellias are in bloom, is famous and is visited by thousands every year.

Most vividly of all Middleton Place, also an Ashley River rice plantation, conveys to present generations a conception of what life was at its best in the great days of the plantation country. The house, with the exception of one detached wing which has now been restored, was destroyed by the Federal forces in 1865; but one can still trace the foundations of the large three-storied brick mansion which stood between the two wings looking out over a series of beautifully proportioned terraces descending to the river which curves outward at the foot of the lawn to form a long straight vista; and there still stands the imposing mausoleum in the old plantation graveyard, now encircled by the garden, where, among others of the name, Arthur Middleton, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, and his son, Henry Middleton, Governor, Senator, and Minister to Russia, lie buried.

One can still see, too, the identical camellias, the first of the kind to be planted in America, presented to Governor Middleton about 1785 by André Michaux, the famous French botanist, who was a frequent visitor to Middleton Place; and after Henry Middleton's death in 1846, his son Williams Middleton further developed the already beautiful grounds, crowning the terraces above the ornamental lakes with lines and masses of gorgeous blooms. Today this plantation garden, formed on a larger and nobler plan than any other in the Low Country, formal in design, yet, with its superb live-oaks and other forest trees, rich in natural beauty, is still owned by a descendant of the original grantee and is still an indescribable fairy-land through which one wanders down aisles walled in and in many places roofed over by azalea and camellia bushes some of them twenty feet in height and often so completely covered with flowers as almost to obscure the foliage.

Magnolia is an enchanted garden, undoubtedly one of the loveliest on earth. Over Middleton Place, with its unobtrusive yet significant memorials of the past, the atmosphere of the plantation era in its brightest noontide glow still hovers. To the student of that past, Middleton Place is more informative than any historical document; soon or late it must be visited and studied by every one who wishes to know what the Carolinian civilization really was in its golden days and at its handsome best. If he will stand on the stone steps of the ruined house looking down over the terraces at the long sweep of the river and will consider what all this stately beauty, so nobly planned and so perfectly created, tells us of the people who made it—of their tastes and desires, of what seemed to them fine and beautiful and what they wished to have around them and before them as they lived and worked—he will find at least a part of the answer to his question at Middleton Place.

# IV

House, grounds and garden, whether simple as many of them were or elaborate as some of them became with increasing prosperity, were only part, though an important part, of the plantation. The plantation was a complex and delicately adjusted organism of which the Great House or Big House was both the heart and brain—an organism which was very much alive. There was often much beauty about it but it did not exist primarily for beauty. Every rice plantation was a going concern, as practical, as much under compulsion to make receipts exceed expenses, as any great industrial plant of today.

Whether this was accomplished depended primarily upon the planter. Hence within easy distance of the residence where the planter and his family lived were the buildings concerned exclusively with the actual working of the plantation, its operation as a business enterprise, and with the housing of those who helped to operate it. On a rice plantation these buildings were many.

The kitchen was generally a separate structure and in many cases the planter's office was in a small building of its own. The dairy and smokehouse were usually at no great distance from the residence, but the position of the stables, barns, wagon sheds, smithy, winnowing house and threshing floors depended upon the lie of the land and of the river or creek.

On comparatively small plantations the negro settlement, where the field hands were quartered, was generally situated close to the plantation house, but on the larger places, where there might be three or four of these settlements, each constituting a little village of cabins, they were generally placed at a considerable distance. So too the position of other units, such as the overseer's house, the hospital or "sick-house" and the plantation church, was governed not only by the topography of the place but also to some extent by the plantation's size.

The rice mill (or mills, for there might be both a pounding mill and a threshing mill or the two might be housed in one building) was an important unit the location of which was dictated by convenience. Prior to the Revolution the grain was milled or dressed partly by hand and partly by animal power—a slow and laborious process. One of the great forward steps taken by the rice industry was the invention by Jonathan Lucas of the pounding mill. The first pounding mill, run by water from a reserve, was followed by others operated by the tides or by steam, which last often furnished the power also for the threshing mills, a much later development, the threshing having been done up to that time by hand with flails.

With the perfecting of the threshing mills, pounding on the plantations began gradually to be abandoned, the rough rice being sent in schooners to Charleston to be pounded by toll mills there. The flail, however, continued to be employed for the threshing of rice to be used for seed, because grain threshed in a mill seldom gave a good stand. An even better method of obtaining good seed rice was by the whipping off of the grain against a barrel, plank or log.

Passing now from the "Big House," the mill and the other plantation buildings to the fields, it will be well to consider how a rice plantation was made and how the crop was grown.

In the early days of rice planting and indeed throughout most of the pre-Revolutionary period the culture of the grain was confined to the "inland swamps" —that is, the forested swamps not necessarily immediately adjacent to the rivers. An abundant supply of water being needed not only for the growth of the rice but also for the elimination of grass and weeds in the rice fields, this was obtained by damming a swamp or lead situated at a slightly higher level than the fields, thus forming a lake known as a "reserve" or "backwater." From this reserve the water was drawn at need for use on the planted land.

This method was limited in its possibilities. The inland swamp fields were widely scattered and frequently rather small, their soils were often shallow, there might occur in time of drought a fatal deficiency of water in the reserve. A tremendous expansion of rice culture was made possible when experiments, beginning about the middle of the eighteenth century, began to demonstrate that the great level areas of marsh and swamp-land lying directly along the fresh-water rivers, and until then considered of little or no value because subject to periodical overflow, could be made to produce rice crops by utilizing for their irrigation and drainage the rise and fall of the river tides. In all the rivers which became important in the culture of rice the influence of the tides extends inland well beyond the point where the water ceases to be salt; and it was through the ingenious harnessing of these tides, making them operate the plantation as a huge hydraulic machine, that rice culture reached a development and a degree of perfection in the Carolina lowlands which had not been attained in any other rice-growing country in two thousand years.

The achievement involved not only enormous labor but also, and primarily, engineering skill of a high order. It is probably well within the mark to say that nowhere else in America at that time were there engineering works demonstrating such vision and practical ability as were manifested in the making of the great Carolina rice plantations. In a paper published in the South Carolina Historical and Genealogical Magazine for April, 1913, the late Judge Henry A. M. Smith, a careful and accurate student, thus describes the reclamation of certain extensive swamplands of Hobcaw Barony on the Waccamaw.

"Originally, from the contemporaneous descriptions, this swamp was covered with a thick forest growth of cypress and gum, intermixed with other swamp growths. It was also subject to the flux and reflux of the tides. Twice in every twenty-four hours the land was submerged by the tidal flow and no work could be performed on it until the water receded. In periods of excessive rain, and the freshets thereby caused, the swollen waters from the river might remain on the land for days or weeks, the fall of the tide on such occasions being insufficient to lay bare the land. To reclaim the soil under such circumstances it had first to be dyked or banked in and then the forest growth had to be removed, and then the land had to be again canalled, ditched and banked into smaller subdivisions, so as to permit the tilth of the soil and its proper drainage and irrigation. Nothing but an ocular inspection of the area can give an adequate idea of the skilful engineering and patient, intelligent supervision that went to the successful result. The only labor at the disposal of the settlers who accomplished the feat was of the most unskilled character, African savages fresh from the Guinea coast. It was an achievement no less skilful than that which excites our wonder in viewing the works of the ancient Egyptians. The task of reclaiming a swamp delta such as that between the Waccamaw and Peedee Rivers involved an engineering skill no less than the construction of a pyramid, yet no one knows how many decades went to the last, and the first was performed in comparatively a few years . . .

"The Southern planter who accomplished this result was a man who worked with his brains on an extended scale; but he gave to his task no less assiduous, continuous and patient industry than the Northern farmer who worked with his hands in the field on a small scale."

The clearing and banking in of the land so that it was no longer subject to unregulated overflow from the river was the first step in the construction of the complicated hydraulic machine which every rice plantation was.

The next step was to divide the whole area by cross embankments and ditches into fields of varying sizes, according to the lie of the land, taking care that each field should be as nearly as possible of uniform level so that an even depth of water could be maintained over the whole field. In each field a large and deep "face-ditch" was dug, leaving a margin of from ten to twenty feet between it and the enclosing embankment or dam. The field was then subdivided into sections, usually long parallelograms, by "quarter-drains," small ditches running parallel with one another and opening at each end into the face-ditches.

In order to grow rice successfully, the fields thus banked and ditched had to be low enough to permit their being flooded with water from the river when the tide was high, and high enough to permit this water to be drained off whenever necessary into the river when the tide there was low. Many factors entered into the problem so that the nicest calculation was required in the selection of the fields. There was necessary also a means of controlling the ingress and egress of water, keeping it on the land as long as needed and getting rid of it completely at other stages of the crop.

This was accomplished by means of rectangular wooden culverts from twenty to thirty feet long, known as "trunks," placed in the main bank along the river, extending, of course, clear through the bank and equipped with a hanging door at each end.

To flood the field, the door at the outer end of the trunk was lifted by hand while tide was flooding in the river, the water poured in and, pushing open the door at the inner end of the trunk, passed on into the canals and ditches, finally covering the field itself to the desired depth. It was kept there as long as needed by the automatic closing of the inner door of the trunk as soon as ebb tide in the river set up a return current in the canal. When it was desired to remove the impounded water from the field, the inner door of the trunk was raised while tide was ebbing in the river, the pressure of the outgoing water forced open the outer door and the water was discharged into the river. This outward flow continued until the tide ceased to ebb in the river and began to flood, when the pressure from without would immediately close the outer door of the trunk so that no water could flow through it into the field.

Fields lying directly along the river were flowed and drained by means of trunks placed in the main river-bank—the dyke or levee as it would be called elsewhere. On many plantations, where the area planted extended a considerable distance from the river, especially large canals were dug, with floodgates on the river, and through these canals the water was carried to and from the "back fields." Each back field was connected with the canal by one or more trunks, so that each could be flowed or drained independently of others in the group.

These large canals served also another useful purpose—they were so linked up that a flat or lighter could be poled within a short distance of any point in the rice fields. Hence the large canals were also water thoroughfares, performing an important function of transportation. The flats which navigated these canals were used for many purposes, such as carrying earth and other materials for the mending of breaks in the banks, lumber for the replacement of trunks, and especially the transportation of loads of rice-in-the-sheaf to the threshing mill on the river, whence the grain was taken in schooners or other flats to a pounding mill on the same or another plantation or else to one of the toll-mills in Charleston.

Thus a rice plantation was a delicately adjusted and extensive "apparatus of levels, floodgates, trunks, canals, banks and ditches . . . requiring skill and unity of purpose to keep in order." When it was kept in order, as it necessarily was on successful plantations, it functioned admirably, but to that end constant care and attention were essential.

In sharp contrast with the rather widespread conception of the rice planter as a gentleman of elegant leisure, the fact is that the management of his fields, aside from the even more imperative duty of taking care of his perhaps several hundred people, imposed upon him a heavy burden which could be lightened only to a certain extent by the assistance of a competent overseer and of selected individuals, especially the head-driver and the trunk-minder, among the negroes themselves. The mere routine was exacting enough and when this was interrupted by one of the many hazards of the tide-flow system, such as a freshet in the river or a hurricane from the ocean threatening to overtop and break the banks and flood the fields with salt water to the ruin of the crop, the planter's life became one not only of desperate anxiety but also of exhausting effort.

# V

The sowing, cultivation and general management of the crop was a process which by the Eighteen-Fifties had been brought to a high level of efficiency on the Carolina rice plantations. Detailed contemporaneous accounts of the methods employed are available: notably that of Governor R. F. W. Allston reprinted in part in De Bow's Review and in Dr. F. P. Porcher's "Resources of the Southern Fields and Forests"; and that of a committee of prominent rice planters, headed by Col. Joshua J. Ward, submitted to the Winyah Agricultural Society in 1850. A recent account is that of David Doar, with a supplement by Theodore D. Ravenel, published in 1936 by the Charleston Museum. Here will be used a summary prepared, before the painting of her pictures, by Alice R. Huger Smith, from information given her by her father, D. E. Huger Smith, and supplemented by various planters of her own generation who planted rice until a comparatively recent date. This summary follows.

Soon after Christmas, when the fields had become as dry as the pitch of the land permitted, the land was ploughed in broad furrows and held thus until it had felt the influence of hard frosts. Then it was broken up with harrows and levelled.

The next step was to trench the land, which was done with trenching hoes or trenching ploughs, and it was necessary that those trenches should be straight. Several of the negroes would run the lines across the great fields as straight and true as though by rule. They were called the "trackers" and were followed by the "trenchers."

About March 20 the sowing was done. A group of women followed the trenches each with a large apron full of seed-rice before her. The rice was thrown with extraordinary precision with a forward movement of the hand, for upon the regularity of the sowing depended in part what was called the "stand" when the rice had sprouted. An irregular sowing meant waste and a "bad stand," which might lead to a poor crop. In earlier days the sowers were followed by the "coverers" and each, with a covering board, like a rake, hauled the earth over the trench so that the birds would have to scratch for a living, and also lest a portion of the seed should be washed out of the trenches to the injury of the "stand." All this was carefully watched by the Driver and supervised by the Overseer.

The working of bird-minding commenced. Men with muskets and cracking whips, women and children with whoops and clapping shingles kept the birds from "settling" and incidentally from eating seed-rice to the injury of that same ideal "good-stand."*

On the following tide the field was flowed from the river, and kept on from three to six days, as the weather demanded, until the rice "pipped," or sprouted. Then the water was taken off, and the rice allowed to come up.

As soon as the rice could be "trailed" from bank to bank with the dew on it at sunrise, the water would again be put on for the "point-flow," or, as it was sometimes called, the "stretch-flow" or "long-flow." This time it was quite deep, even to the top of the check banks, and the rice was "stretched" from three to six inches according to the temperature, for one of the reasons for the water at that season was that it kept the rice warm.

Then the water was dropped to "gauge," which meant that the rice in low places could be "trailed"—the hills being dry. As the rice in the bottoms stood up, with the air and sun, the water was raised so as to cover the hills again to keep down the grass—always ready to compete with the crop. This point-flow or stretch-flow lasted from about twenty-one to fifty-odd days—as long as the rice thrived, for the fields were carefully watched, and every change in the growth was noted. When the rice began to "sicken," which showed in the colour and in other ways, the water was again taken off—slowly, so as not to throw down the rice in the low places. The trunk-minder, who was a most important personage, would barely crack the trunks, so that the drainage was very gradual.

The water was kept off for forty days, during which time the fields were hoed twice.

The method just described of "sowing" and "covering" gave way to what was thought to be a better treatment for sowing. The new plan dispensed with the

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* "Bird-minding" was directed mainly against the bobolinks, known in the plantation country as ricebirds, which came in May on their northbound migration from South America and again about mid-August on their return flight. Their numbers seemed incalculable and the damage they did, especially when the rice was in the milk or dough state, was very great. On the other hand, crows, blackbirds and grackles often more than atoned for such depredations as they committed, by waging vigorous warfare against the destructive green and white caterpillar or "rice worm"; while the wild ducks which swarmed in the rice fields helped to keep down the obnoxious red or volunteer rice.

"covering." The seed-rice was mixed with clay, sometimes by the hearty dancing of the negro girls shuffling the rice and wet clay together on the barn-floor. Then, when it was sown, the water was put on at once, the clay keeping the rice from floating to the surface.

For about a week, according to temperature, the water remained on the field. The edges of the fields were carefully scanned to catch the moment when the first rice "jumped." Some of the grains would be found floating against the banks with a long green sprout on one end, and a root with a hook at the other end. As soon as this was observed the water was taken off as quickly as possible, so that even the low places would be dry for at least twenty-four hours. In this time the root would hook itself into the soil to such an extent that when the water was put back for the "stretch-flow" the seed would not "jump" again. This was supposed to make a stronger growth than "covered" rice, and one that grew more rapidly. The handling of the stretch-flow then continued as above described.

This management of the water was an exceedingly scientific and complicated affair. The rice-planters for generations had put thought into the various possibilities of improving the grade of their rice, and many unsuccessful experiments were made, as well as those that brought the desired results. The regulation of the water was ceaselessly important. It was increased and decreased as the rice grew, and to allow for local rains, or for evaporation. Also, if the rice was over-stretched, it would fall down when the water was drawn off.

When the ears were about to form, the last flow called the "harvest-flow" was put on to assist the ears in filling. The harvest-flow lasted from forty to fifty days, according to the maturing of the rice. The water was kept up to the "bead"—this being the top of the hollow joint in the barrel, where the ear was being formed. First, the water for two or three days was just over the bead to stretch it up, then it was brought just below the bead, and held there. It was reduced and lowered as the rice shot out and seemed to need it.

Rice has a minute, light blue flower which appears at the end of each immature grain, not all at once but beginning at the ends and working back to the stalk. Unless these flowers pollenized each grain it did not "fill," and that grain would be "light." The pollenization seemed to take place early in the day for about noon the grain would close its little crack and nip off the flower. Morning showers were therefore very unfortunate and a storm disastrous, for the little blooms were washed off before the pollenization took place—and "blast," as it was called, was the result.

Another hazard was, as everywhere, the caterpillars. If they got into a field the only thing was to open the trunks and let in the water quickly to top the rice and drown them. This danger was generally in the period of dry growth—but the cure was a risk in itself, for it had to be done very quickly. The acreage had to be flowed and drained again in forty-eight hours, otherwise the rice would change from its dry growth roots to its water root and this change of root system at that period of its growth would put it back about ten days. Sometimes a planter would put on this "intermediate water" so as to retard the growth for some reason—such as to escape the onslaught of the ricebirds, who came at a more or less fixed season, on their migratory flights.

The rice was cut, of course, when it was ripe—seasons differing. On a plantation on Cooper River it was cut one year on August 8, an ordinary crop of about forty to fifty bushels to the acre. It sprouted again from the roots and was cut in October for the second time yielding eight bushels to the acre. This was, of course, unusual.

The fields were left in the stubble for quite a while, and then burned off, by some planters, and flowed for two or three weeks. Between fire and water the roots were so destroyed and rotted out that there was no fear of the grade of the crop the following year being brought down by "volunteer rice,"—rice that has retrograded to its earlier and unimproved type. This has nothing to do with "wild-rice," which strictly speaking is not rice at all.

The planting on different rivers differed in details, and indeed, between neighbouring plantations, for planters, like doctors, often disagreed. Some rivers were more dangerous than others, and more liable to freshets or to salt—and the water on some plantations was more difficult to handle than on others. A Cooper River yield was apt to run up to fifty bushels to the acre, but had not as good quality to stand the pestle as some. On Combahee River, for instance, the acre gave from thirty-five to forty bushels, but the rice went to the pestle and never cracked.

The owner of a plantation on one river might have to count on losing one crop in four, or even in three—on another river the risks might not be nearly so great. But the lands might be richer on the more dangerous rivers and bring that compensation. The question of water was so vital, and the land so generally flat, that the engineering of the plantation drainage was of first importance. This branch of science thus became an essential study of the rice planter.

# VI

THE Carolina rice planter of the Fifties could have pointed with satisfaction to three notable technical achievements.

He could have asserted that the commodity which it was his business to produce had been developed by his and his forbears' skill and patience to a degree of excellence unequalled anywhere else in the world.

He could have asserted that the making and operation of the Carolina rice plantations represented probably the most remarkable American achievement in agricultural engineering up to that time.

He could have asserted that the Carolina plantations, with others elsewhere in the South, constituted (not in all cases but in many) the closest approximation that America had seen, or is likely ever to see, to the agricultural ideal of self-contained, self-sufficient farming.

All this is quite contrary to the common notion. In fact, it may appear almost incredible in face of the current legend of Southern slackness and practical incapacity. Nevertheless, the first statement, concerning the preeminence of Carolina gold-seed rice, can easily be verified. The second is supported by the accounts given in the two preceding chapters of how the Carolina plantations were made and operated. The third, perhaps the most interesting of all in view of the economic and agricultural problem of today, is worth considering, and in considering it certain related facts, also contrary to the current notion, should be brought out.

In size the rice plantations varied, but most of them were large tracts and some were larger than the ancient baronies of the Landgraves' time. There were plantations measured in thousands of acres; there were others whose acres were counted in the upper hundreds; of really small places there were very few, primarily because small-scale rice-planting did not pay. "A little plantation is a sorry undertaking in the Low Country," said the famous James L. Petigru of Charleston, referring to one of his own which had only two hundred acres in rice.

The tenure of land in such large blocks has often been pointed to as one of the fatal defects of the plantation system, but the point is at least open to question in view of the modern trend back to large scale farming. In the Carolina plantation country of the Fifties this condition was already fixed and it was a natural and probably inevitable result of physical environment and economic tendencies—a result which probably no amount of human effort could have altered.

It had its defects, of course, but they were not always precisely what some suppose them to have been. Today when land is held in large estates the consequence often is that large areas which might support a numerous population are unavailable for such use. This was not true of the rice plantations. Each plantation was generally owned in the technical sense by one individual, the planter; but dwelling upon it and deriving a living from it was a population ranging from several score in the case of the smaller places to several hundred or even a thousand people.

It is easy to say that it would have been better if each place could have been divided up and distributed among those several hundred each to do with his own plot as he saw fit; but however attractive such a plan might be in theory—and however sound it might be in a different environment with a different population—the practical result of it here would have been disastrous. A large proportion of the thousands of negroes thus thrown upon their own resources would unquestionably have failed, in the absence of supervision and help, to make a living from the soil, many of them would have starved, and in a short time most of the plantation lands would have gone back to wilderness.

The Carolina rice plantations of the ante-bellum time withdrew no lands from general use. On the contrary, the plantations, skilfully managed and rendered successful by the intelligence and resources of the planters, made possible the support of thousands of people on the land, affording those thousands the most complete "economic security" that any people in America have ever had. For this security, covering the whole period of their lives from babyhood to old age, a price was paid—a price perhaps not wholly excessive in the case of a people who were only in process of learning how to stand for themselves. Be that as it may, the widespread conception of the rice plantations as one-man principalities which withdrew immense areas from the use and support of the general population is one of the most obvious of the many errors commonly entertained about the plantation régime. It is an ironical fact that the termination of the plantation era with the cessation of the rice plantations as such has brought about the very condition which theorizing critics of the plantation system were wont to decry.

The lands of a rice plantation were of three kinds: the low-lying reclaimed swamp or marsh-lands where rice, the money-crop, was planted; the forest which supplied many useful articles; the upland cleared lands devoted to the growing of provision crops and to grazing. The importance of these latter, their essential place in the economy of the plantation, has not as a rule been sufficiently realized. They were mainly responsible for what many are likely to regard as one of the most interesting facts about the plantations—the fact that in many of them the sound ideal of the self-contained and independent agricultural unit was realized to an extent and upon a scale which fills the modern student with amazement.

This was certainly not true of all of them. It was true of different plantations in varying degree, depending upon the policy of the individual planter and the proximity of markets which could supply economically certain of the plantation's needs. There were, of course, articles, including many tools and implements, which could always be obtained more advantageously by commerce and which it would have been foolish or futile to try to make at home—though many articles were made there by men specially trained as carpenters, blacksmiths, coopers, wheelwrights, etc. There were, too, plantations where concentration upon the money crop was carried to a point which entailed a considerable expenditure of the profits for the purchase of provisions. But one of the most important, as it is also one of the least considered, achievements of the best Carolinian planters is the fact that in a large number of cases they managed their huge farms with such skill that not only was the money crop lucrative but each place produced out of its own soil year after year much the greater part and often practically the whole of the sustenance of the hundreds of people, as well as the many work animals, that dwelt thereon. In the history of American agriculture down to and including today is there a comparable achievement?

An interesting example was Jehossie, a Carolina rice plantation on the Edisto River. Because it was one of the largest rice places of which a contemporaneous account has come down and partly, too, because of the source of the account, Jehossie has been cited by Dr. U. B. Phillips and others for various purposes in plantation literature. In no other respect is it more interesting than that which now concerns us.

In 1850 Solon Robinson, an Iowa farmer making a tour of the South as correspondent for the American Agriculturist, visited Jehossie, owned by William Aiken, one-time Governor of South Carolina. Robinson discovered it to be not only an efficient and profitable rice plantation, making as a rule some twenty-five thousand dollars in gross profits while the expenses did not exceed ten thousand dollars, but he found also that the provision fields commonly fed the force of negroes on the place, numbering about seven hundred, besides the many mules and other work animals which so large a plantation required.

The negroes, Robinson noted further, occupied "eighty-four double frame houses, each containing two tenements of three rooms to a family besides the cock-loft. There are two common hospitals and a 'lying-in hospital,' and a very neat commodious church, which is well filled every Sabbath . . . The owner of all this property lives in a very humble cottage, embowered in dense shrubbery and making no show . . . He and his family are as plain and unostentatious in their manners as the house they live in . . . I fully believe that he is more concerned to make his people comfortable and happy than he is to make money."

Coming from an Iowa farmer of the period, that is as impressive a tribute as one could wish to the practical achievement, humanitarian as well as economic, of the plantation régime. Today the plantation era has ended, the rice plantations are no more, Governor Aiken's "people" (they were always that rather than slaves in the Carolina plantation country) are no longer any man's people in the same sense. And on Jehossie today fourteen negroes derive a living from the over-grown provision fields which once fed seven hundred men, women and children year in and year out, and the abandoned rice fields, their banks broken, their canals clogged, their trunks rotted away, feed only the ducks and herons and other wild things which abound there. Jehossie has gone back to wilderness.

# VII

BECAUSE it was the distinctive and in many ways the most fruitful fact in the life of the Carolina rice country, something more may well be said about the close community of feeling and interest, amounting almost to identity, which, as Alice Smith has pointed out, existed between the plantations and Charleston.

Charleston was the capital of the Low Country plantations and in a true sense their heart and brain to a degree not paralleled in Virginia or Mississippi or the Piedmont or any other part of the South. The plantations and Charleston, in fact, constituted what was in practical effect a city-state unlike anything else that has existed in America—a compact and well-knit regional unit each part of which influenced the other so that the resultant society was neither purely rural nor purely urban but shared the characteristics of both town and country. Looking back today, it is clear that this condition had far-reaching consequences in many directions and was one of the most potent factors in giving the Rice Coast a political and social importance out of all proportion to its area and population.

It was a fortunate development and yet it arose out of what seems at first glance a disadvantage. During half the year, from the middle of spring until the frosts of autumn, the rice planter and his family could not live on the plantation because of the danger of malarial infection. Though the negroes were comparatively immune to the fever, most white persons venturing to remain in close proximity to the ricefields overnight during the summer months ran serious risk of illness. Since the facts as to the transmission of the fever by the mosquito were not then known and preventive measures were therefore impossible, there was nothing to do but close the plantation house from early May until the first hard frosts and establish residence elsewhere.

Fortunately there were healthy situations near at hand. The pinelands, only a few miles distant from the rice fields, afforded a safe retreat, so in various localities throughout the Low Country little pineland villages grew up—Pineville, Pinopolis, McPhersonville, Adam's Run and others—where the planters of the neighborhood built summer houses whence each morning they could ride to their fields, returning in the afternoon to take part in the impromptu social activities which made life in these communities delightful. Other families, instead of moving to the pinelands, moved to "the salt"—that is, to the ocean beaches of the sea-islands or to small towns on the edge of the mainland such as Beaufort and Georgetown.* The principal resort of the planters and their families, however, during the season when residence on the plantations was impracticable, was Charleston, the metropolis of the Low Country, a city of no great size as size is measured now but of which it was perhaps still possible to say, as Edmund Burke had said at an earlier time, that of all American cities it "approached more nearly to the social refinement of a great European capital."

It was thus that the plantations and Charleston came to be one to a far greater extent than would have followed from the simple fact that Charleston was the shipping port for the products of the plantations. They were one in the more intimate sense that their populations were in large degree identical and interchangeable; and in creating this condition the rice planters were the chief factors. The Low Country plantations were by no means all of them rice places. Especially on the coast islands the culture of long-staple or sea island cotton had reached a high state of development, and the sea island cotton planters were of the same stock as the rice planters and of the same social standing. Their homes, overlooking the salt rivers or bays close to the ocean, were most of them delightful places of residence all the year round, and thus they were under no such compulsion as were the rice planters to spend part of each year in the city—though some of them did so. Hence, while their influence upon the life of the Low Country as a whole was exceedingly important, they did not to the same extent impress their personalities upon the city itself.

In Charleston, their home for half the year, many rice planters built town-houses as handsome as their plantation residences; there they maintained large establishments of numerous servants, and there, not only in summer but often in late winter and early spring when Race Week, the St. Cecelia Balls and other public and private entertainments made the city one of the gayest in America, they dispensed a lavish and often a lordly hospitality. They were—with those of the cotton planters who maintained town-houses—the dominant element in the city's life, they shaped the physical aspect of the place and moulded its thought, and it is mainly to them that Charleston owes an individuality which still impresses her visitors. "Their positive distinction of line and tone," a New Englander (Mr. M. A. DeWolfe Howe), wrote in the Atlantic Monthly not long ago of the old houses of Charleston, "speaks for a civilization, a highly organized society, that has no American duplicate in scale and effect. Not the dwelling houses alone, but the public buildings, churches and halls, connote a dignity and leisure that could have sprung only from an order of existence in which a powerful local oligarchy concerned itself with matters of grace and beauty."

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* Beaufort and Georgetown developed personalities of their own and drew to themselves the planters of their neighborhoods. The many handsome old houses which still exist in Beaufort attest the fine culture which centered there and which, though intimately connected with Charleston, had its distinct individuality.

Thus the rice planters were as much city folk as they were country gentlemen and they gave to their city the qualities which distinguished them, deriving from her in turn certain characteristics which they would not otherwise have had. This conception of the Low Country plantation community as part-rural and part-urban —as, in fact, a closely-knit city-state of which Charleston was the center and brain rather than a loosely-knit wholly agricultural society like most other parts of the plantation South—is essential to an understanding of the region.

Socially and culturally the results were important; politically they were decisive. When, about 1820, Virginia, whose problems were not wholly those of the lower South, began to relinquish her political leadership of the section, it was South Carolina that assumed it and kept it until the end. This was made possible because the Carolina plantation community was not a loose group of separate ganglia but a highly developed organism with a central brain. "Like Athens, you control Greece," exclaimed Jeremiah Black, President Buchanan's Secretary of State, referring to South Carolina's leadership. The smile may be extravagant, but the statement was not an exaggeration.

The fact that the Low Country plantation community had a central brain—Charleston—and was urban as well as rural had interesting results in other directions also. It has often been observed that the arts do not flourish in purely agrarian societies. In the over-urbanized environment in which the arts exist today, manifesting many signs of decadence, it might well be a fruitful inquiry to re-examine, from a fresh viewpoint, the state of the arts in this agrarian-urban society of the Carolina Low Country. Certainly nowhere else in America except Massachusetts was there such a stirring of both literary and scientific activity; and this is the more noteworthy when one considers how largely politics necessarily pre-empted the ablest minds among the Carolinians.

For reasons which it would be interesting to trace it seems possible that scant justice has been done their literary striving. From James Adair and Eliza Wilkinson of the eighteenth century to W. H. Trescot and Henry Timrod of the Confederacy, there are names that should be better known. A critical fashion which has made democracy of the Walt Whitman kind its literary yardstick, and which is slow to perceive how events are now indicating the sentimentality of that conception, is hardly capable of a just appraisal of the Southern literary effort. To suggest this is not to dismiss Whitman, greatly significant as the authentic voice of the new democracy in mid-career. But if it shall increasingly appear that the Jacksonian Revolution was not, after all, the opening of Utopia's gate, perhaps the Southern voices should not be dismissed summarily because they failed to sing its glory and its promise. A tendency to discount them—even Poe—for this reason has been rather noticeable in recent years. The passing of that mood may yet give the Southern literature of the ante-bellum era, to which the Carolinians contributed so largely, not an imposing position in world-literature of course, but a considerably higher place than it is now allowed in comparison with contemporary literary achievement elsewhere in America.

Though the Rice Coast produced no such flaming genius as Poe, it has already been noted as an exceedingly interesting fact that this region, generally supposed to have been hopelessly romantic, produced the most notable realist in American fiction of the period, William Gilmore Simms. In contrast with Cooper, Simms in his Indian stories painted the frontier as it was with all its brutality and sordidness as well as its strength; and though his gentlemen and ladies are generally types, the "rough-neck" rogues and swamp-men of his Revolutionary tales are probably the most life-like figures to be discovered anywhere in the American ante-bellum literary scene. The Rice Coast can claim at least part of the credit for the greatest realist who has yet appeared in American social and political literature, John C. Calhoun; for though born an up-countryman, Calhoun owed his inspiration and the essentials of his doctrine to the Low Country. In spite of a widespread notion to the contrary, the region's contribution to the solid scientific achievement of the day was probably not inferior to that of any other part of the country—Charleston had been, in fact, from an early date one of the most active scientific centers in America.

The truth may some day be recognized—and it is directly contrary to the now prevalent belief—that at a time when the writing and thinking of the North were almost wholly transcendental or romantic, the Carolina Low Country and Charleston were contributing more than their share of what realism existed in the intellectual product of the period. One who looks today at the houses which this agrarian-urban civilization built in Charleston and on the "seated rivers"—houses which are now recognized as much nearer to what is real and permanent in architectural design than the products of the pinchbeck age which followed—must find it difficult to believe that the civilization which produced those houses was other than one guided by very real genius and a sound conception of intellectual integrity.

# VIII

"Slavery" is not a good name for the institution as it existed on the plantations of the Carolina Low Country. The planter did not speak of his negroes as slaves; he called them his "people" and as he spoke of them so he thought of them—they were his people, not his chattels, and many of them were his loved and devoted friends.

And yet they were his chattels also. And though it was unlike and probably better than any other slavery that the world had known in past centuries, and though it had worked wonders for the negro race, lifting millions of negroes out of barbarism in a far shorter time than any other barbarous people had been so lifted in the history of mankind—still it was slavery. How was it and why was it that a system which had become an anachronism in the world of the 1850's found perhaps its strongest champions in the Carolina plantation country?

That is a question which needs to be answered.

Slavery was, of course, an institution which had grown up with the country and for which the people of the South were no more responsible than those of New England or New York. At the time of its introduction it had been almost universally regarded as proper and necessary; it had existed in the North as well as in the South and for economic reasons alone it had died out in the former and increased in the latter region. But long before the 1850's the economic aspect of slavery had become secondary. Long before then slavery had become a social problem of the first magnitude in which the very existence of the white South was bound up. The first necessity of the South was the preservation of its white civilization, and because of certain developments outside its borders, the South could see only one way in which this could be assured. If any man, North or South, could have devised and proposed another way, a different story would have been written.

Unfortunately that was impossible. It was made finally impossible in the fateful year 1831 by a group of reformers, the "New Abolitionists," who in that year began their militant activities in earnest, whose zeal far exceeded their wisdom, and of whom the temperate North of the period disapproved as heartily as did the Southerners.* Until then, in spite of the great expansion of the plantation system as a result of the invention of the cotton gin in 1792, the emancipation sentiment which had always existed in the South had continued to grow—in 1826, according to Temple, one hundred and three of the one hundred and forty-three emancipation societies in the United States were in the South. The Southerners were a normally intelligent people, and they were fully and sensitively aware that world-opinion was crystallizing against their "peculiar institution." In spite of the grave difficulties in the way, their form of slavery would undoubtedly have evolved into something else better suited to the spirit of the age if its evolution had not been prevented.

What prevented it was a danger threatening them from the outside—a danger which the radical New Abolitionist activities created and made manifest as early as 1831—the danger that a change, directed and shaped from the outside, in the status of the three and a half million negroes in the South (where the whites numbered about five and a half million) would not be managed wisely and intelligently but would take the radical form desired by the extreme Abolitionist element. The South feared that such a change in the status of its huge negro population would destroy its civilization.

The fear was not a fanciful one. What was likely to happen was all too plain. Calhoun, in a memorial to the Southern people in 1849, signed by many other Southerners, summed up the prospect. The radical New Abolitionism in the North would not permit emancipation in the South to stop with emancipation. "Another step would be taken to raise them (the negroes) to a political and social equality" and "when raised to an equality they would become the fast political associates of the North, acting and voting with them on all questions, and by this perfect union between them holding the South in complete subjection. The blacks and the profligate whites that might unite with them would become the principal recipients of Federal patronage, and would, in consequnece, be raised above the whites of the South in the social and political scale. We would, in a word, change conditions with them, a degradation greater than has yet fallen to the lot of a free and enlightened people."

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* "Then, sir, there are the Abolition societies . . . I do not think them useful. I think their operations for the last twenty years have produced nothing good or valuable. . . . I can not but see what mischief their interference with the South has caused."—Daniel Webster, March, 1850.

In face of this peril—and later the "Reconstruction" period was to show how real the peril was—all other considerations were subordinated, were indeed impossible. For the South the slavery problem became the negro problem, and what in reality the Carolinians strove against from 1831 to 1865 was a threatened "solution" of the negro problem which would destroy them. In the end, when this threatened "solution" was put in force, it came very near to destroying them and would probably have done so had it not been abandoned, with the tacit consent of the North, after unspeakably disastrous trial.

That in bare outline is what one really needs to know and remember about the slavery issue in order to understand the attitude of the white civilization of the Carolina rice country in the 1850's. It is brought out here only because it is absolutely necessary to an understanding of the plantation people.*

There is, of course, much more that might be said—but most of it has been said many times already. In utter contrast to, and yet wholly compatible with, the inflexible determination of the Carolinians to preserve their civilization from the ruin which must come to it if the millions of negroes in the South were given political power was their feeling for and treatment of the negro as an individual. Speaking of slavery in the South as a whole, Dr. Ulrich B. Phillips, the historian, whose work for the South must always be held in grateful remembrance, has summed it thus:

"There were injustice, oppression, brutality and heart-burning in the régime—but where in the struggling world are these absent? There were also gentleness, kind-hearted friendship and mutual loyalty to a degree hard for him to believe who regards the system with a theorist's eye and a partisan squint. For him on the other hand who has known the considerate and cordial, courteous and charming men and women, white and black, which that picturesque life in its best phases produced, it is impossible to agree that its basis and its operation were wholly evil, the law and the prophets to the contrary notwithstanding."

To that there is nothing to add except perhaps a reminder that the Carolina plantation country was a long-settled and highly civilized region from which the rawness of the frontier had long passed away so that its practice of slavery involved, as was only natural, a minimum of brutality, a maximum of human kindness. Nowhere in America was slavery a gentler, kindlier thing than in the Carolina Low Country.

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* According to the conventional view, it was the invention of the cotton gin and of improved machinery for the English mills, making cotton growing exceedingly profitable, that ended emancipation discussion in the South and caused it to give up all idea of getting rid of slavery. The cotton gin was invented in 1792 and the English mill improvements took place at about the same time. It was not until after 1831, the year in which the New Abolitionism got under way, that the sudden and complete change in the South's attitude toward slavery occurred.

## IX

It has been almost a misfortune for the Old South that its life was so full of picturesque beauty. Of the Carolina Low Country, the Rice Coast, this is true to a well nigh tragical extent. Enthralled by its romantic aspect, too few have looked beneath the surface for the reality which was under the romance and was immeasurably more important. There has been in recent fiction a quite industrious digging up of the animalities of negro life and the depravities of certain degenerate white elements—the uglinesses that exist in every society. But the far more important realism of the truly significant South, of the men and women who made it what it was, has been missed almost completely.

A number of factors have contributed to this result and among them the fact noted above—that the life of the plantation régime was so bright with the colors of romance that its more solid aspects have been hidden. Here we have been and shall be concerned primarily with the latter, but the picture would not be complete or accurate if the romantic aspect were ignored. As the beauty of Alice Smith's paintings of the rice country is surely as essential an element as their authenticity, so what is often called the glamour of the plantation life, those features of it which the romanticist emphasizes, should not be neglected here.

There was glamour in abundance in the life of the Rice Coast of the Fifties; perhaps no other society that has ever existed in America was richer in respect to this quality. The mode of life made it so, the loveliness of the countryside, the character of the people, the story that lay behind them. The glow of it is visible from the very beginning—from Henry Woodward, the amazing adventurer, through the days of the old Landgraves and the old Baronies, of the Indians and the pirates, of Francis Marion, the "Swamp Fox," perhaps the most romantic warrior of the Revolution, whose strongholds were the cypress fastnesses of the Low Country and whose battlefields were the plantations themselves. It is visible in even the soberest telling of the Rice Coast's story and never more so than in the region's culminating period when it had reached its zenith of cultural development and political importance.

Hence no account of that period, fictional or otherwise, would be complete or accurate which held itself superior to so merely "romantic" a thing as the duel, for the duel in its most formal, punctilious, and genuine form flourished here and helped to make the people what they were. It helped, too, to make them misunderstood by those who did not know them.

Thus Ralph Waldo Emerson, in an hysterical address in 1856, could confidently tell his Concord audience that in South Carolina "life is a fever; man is an animal, given to pleasure, frivolous, irritable, spending his days in hunting and practicing with deadly weapons to defend himself against his slaves and against his companions brought up in the same idle and dangerous way. Such people live for the moment, they have properly no future, and readily risk on every passion a life which is of small value to themselves or to others." It was hard indeed for the Concord of the Fifties to understand the Charleston of the Fifties. "One who can remember," wrote Mrs. St. Julien Ravenel in her "Charleston, The Place and The People" (1906), "the exquisite urbanity of the social intercourse of fifty years ago, and contrast it with the careless expressions, the rough give and take of the present, can but wonder how much the old way (resort to the duel in matters of personal honour) had to do with the self-respect and consideration for others of that society."

At any rate, whether for good or for ill—and its effects were not wholly evil—the duel was a part of the Rice Coast's life. So, too, were a hundred other "romantic" things, and most romantic of all, perhaps, the Tournament.

It was a region of fine horses and fine riders, of country gentlemen whose life in many ways was not unlike that of the English baronial estates and in it Sir Walter was still held in high esteem. Thus the "chivalric tournament," in the same modified form in which it had been brought across the ocean to Virginia and Maryland, was practiced in the Carolina Low Country, perhaps upon a more elaborate scale than anywhere else in the South, with Kings-at-Arms, Masters of the Lists, Masters of Horse, and all the punctilio of the Age of Chivalry. Splendidly mounted "Knights" in costume, each bearing his appropriate device, tilted for the ring in front of gaily decorated pavilions filled with the youth and beauty of the plantations, and the winning "Knight" crowned with fitting ceremony a Queen of Love and Beauty who that evening was belle of the Tournament Ball. It was manly sport as well as stately pageantry, it helped to develop the splendid horsemanship of men who a little later were to ride in Wade Hampton's cavalry, and it was no less characteristic of the life of the plantations in the Fifties than the hard work and sober thought which underlay that life.

Race Week, when the plantation people flocked to Charleston, not for the races only but for the many festivities leading up to the Jockey Club Ball, had its counterpart on a smaller scale at Pineville, a pineland village where the planters of St. Stephens and St. John's Parishes had their summer homes. The Pineville race meets were famous in the Fifties and at Pineville especially elaborate tournaments were held. Throughout the plantation country hunting clubs, with their periodical deer drives, when the deer were hunted with horse and hounds, brought the men of the plantations together at frequent intervals. Life seems to have been gayer on some of the rivers than on others; different parishes varied in custom and in temperament as was only natural since in some of them the English strain predominated, in others the French Huguenot; plantation dances, house parties and the Christmas merry-making were sometimes elaborate, sometimes simple. With all this friendly gayety, nearly everywhere religion was real though not vociferous, and the long drive each Sunday to the parish church was perhaps the most important event of the week. And nearly everywhere, as the sectional crisis darkened, national politics was a subject for grave or heated discussion whenever planters, old or young, gathered in their homes or at the neighbourhood hunting clubs where often the talk over the nuts and wine was more absorbing even than the chase of the deer had been.

In these and many other aspects it was a society to delight the romanticist. It was a society which was a little world in itself; where men clung to a tradition of conduct not the less handsome because it was becoming obsolete; where the ancient chivalric attitude toward woman had suffered little change; where a liberal culture had created much that was beautiful and even stately; where a strangely lovely countryside, alive with game and birds, provided a perfect setting for a life feudal in appearance if not in actuality—a society all the more fascinating to the romanticist because he knows that over it hung the shadow of doom.

It is right and proper that this side of it should be perpetuated in song and story. But it is a pity that the glamour thus thrown around them has so obscured the authentic lineaments of its men and women that we think of them only as denizens of a romantic Poictesme and find no reality in the Old South except in the hut of the negro and the cabin of the poor-white.

For the greatly important realism which the Old South had was in those men and women of the plantation régime. It is a near-sighted vision that sees them as backward-looking romantics because they did not change with the changing times. As to their great and terrible social problem, it is too often forgotten that circumstances beyond their control fixed their attitude for them; and as to many other matters, some of them of the first importance, the years seem to be vindicating much that they believed.

It is true that in important respects, such for instance as the increasing centralization of government, the drift of the world is more swiftly than ever away from the principles which they maintained. But the very acceleration of this drift toward conclusions surely disastrous to liberty is bringing a widespread perception of dangers, and realities, which the Old South saw clearly a century ago. Page after page of Calhoun reads today like inspired prophecy.

## X

The outstanding achievement of the Rice Coast—the reason why it is one of the permanently significant regions of America—was the form of democracy which it developed.

Beginning in the early days when the Low Country was the State and taking definite form after the Revolution, there proceeded in South Carolina, under the compulsion of powerful social and economic forces, an experiment in democracy sharply different from that which was proceeding in the North and West. Out of the Carolinian experiment came the political system of the Old South; out of the Western and Northern experiment came the modern American democracy which we have today. The former, the basic philosophy of which was supplied by the Rice Coast, was not, as is often supposed, a failure because of a fatal defect in motive. It was ended not by its own breakdown but by collision with the other system, and there followed a long period during which its merits and lessons have been lost to sight. Until the modern American democracy which had overwhelmed and supplanted it began in our time to show serious symptoms of weakness, there was little chance that the rejected Old Southern or Carolinian system could obtain a new hearing at the bar of public opinion. There ought to be such a chance now.

In its essentials it was a modified reincarnation of the ancient Greek ideal.* Nevertheless, it was no exotic growth but thoroughly native to the soil, the natural and logical result of the circumstances in which the Carolinians found themselves and to which neither the Jeffersonian (soon to become the Jacksonian) nor the Hamiltonian theory could be accommodated. It conceived that in a society composed of capable and incapable, virtuous and vicious—and every society since the dawn of history has been thus composed—a universal democracy relying solely upon the unrestrained will of the majority is impracticable and must come to disaster, thus injuring the true cause of liberty and leading to a relapse into autocracy. Only if the immutable fact of human inequality be recognized frankly as a law of nature and due provision be made for it and for the protection of the numerically weaker elements of society against the numerically stronger, can the true interests of society as a whole be made secure and a lasting democracy be achieved.*

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* "The pronounced drift of Southern thought, in the years immediately preceding the Civil War, towards the ideal of the Greek democracy has been too carelessly forgotten by later times."—Parrington: "The Romantic Revolution in America."

"They were staunch patriots and loved democracy, but it was the ancient Greek type of democracy that they had in mind, not the modern industrial kind."—Schaper: "Sectionalism and Representation in South Carolina."

This realistic conception of the bases of democracy, with the implications flowing from it, is the concrete manifestation of that "way of thought" which, as was said at the beginning, the Rice Coast was. It was a way of thought which did not, as is commonly supposed, grow out of a romantic fondness for the past, an unwillingness or inability to face the facts of the present. On the contrary, it was the result of a courageous facing of facts and realities, especially the presence of millions of negroes and the growing power of the North, which the Carolinians saw with complete clearness.

It is probably no exaggeration to say that upon no other region of America in the period before the Civil War did reality press more insistently than upon the Rice Coast, a highly developed society whose people saw its very existence threatened by the current trends towards complete equalitarianism on the one hand and consolidation of government on the other. With the negro before them as a visible demonstration of the folly of equalitarianism carried to its logical conclusion, and with their own experience in the Union foreshadowing more and more ominously the certain fate of minorities under a consolidated government of the unrestrained majority, their region became a laboratory especially favorable for the discovery of truth disentangled from sentimentality—a philosophy in accord with natural law and with human nature as it is rather than as the idealist might wish it to be. That the philosophy which the people of the Rice Coast evolved under this pressure failed in the end to save them is no proof of its unsoundness, for the destruction which overwhelmed them came from without. That it was a philosophy designed primarily to meet their special problems does not detract from its interest, because their problems were fundamental ones which must be met sooner or later by every society and which every democracy must deal with adequately if it is to survive.

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* That the incapable must be held in a condition of slavery is, of course, not to be considered an inherent tenet of this philosophy. That, for the good of all, the incapable must be denied participation in the difficult business of government is obviously an inherent tenet. In the Old South, for reasons already outlined, the slavery system, although an anachronism, seemed to be the only way in which this non-participation of incapable (and racially alien) millions could be assured.

Out of the philosophy thus evolved—a philosophy based primarily upon a clear and frank recognition of the fact of human inequality with all the far-reaching corollaries of that fact—there developed a distinct form of democracy which may accurately be called the Carolinian. Two principal intellectual currents shaped the Old South's thought. One, originating in Virginia, made Kentucky and, largely, Tennessee. The other, originating in South Carolina, spread with the plantation system over the whole cotton belt and proved the more potent of the two. Though her genius was yet to blaze forth with unexampled brilliancy in another field—that of war—Virginia, which was not of the "Deep South," gradually relinquished political leadership of the section. More and more definitely leadership passed to South Carolina and in her hands the revision of Jeffersonism in accord with Southern realities proceeded.

Thus, while its prototype in many respects may be found in the classic Greek ideal, it was South Carolina that re-created and developed realistic democracy in America, spreading it with much else that was originally Carolinian over all the "Deep South"; and, before that, it was the Low Country, the Rice Coast, which created and developed and spread over South Carolina (as the plantation system with cotton as the staple spread inland) the philosophy upon which this democracy was based. Finally it was a Carolinian, Calhoun, who formulated it with its leading implications—of which the principle of local self-government was among the foremost—as a reasoned and fully rounded political system of national application.

Bound up, as it then was, with slavery, and coming, as it did, nearly a hundred years before the difference between mass-action and sound democracy began to be demonstrated by the events of our day, rejection of Calhoun's proposal by the industrial North and the equalitarian West was inevitable. But slavery is not in reality an essential element in it; its importance far transcends the clash of sectional interests which foreshortened mens' vision at that time; since then the excesses of the American experiment, against which Calhoun warned, have begun to bear their inevitable bitter fruit. It is surely written that the tragic figure of Calhoun will before long begin to emerge from the mists as a political thinker of universal significance who—in spite of his unavoidable commitment to slavery—was, in the broader aspects of his thinking, a hundred years ahead of his time.

A vitally important fact which nearly all historians have ignored completely should be brought out strongly at this point. This is the fact that the political philosophy and plan for the revision of American democracy in the direction of reality which Calhoun proposed for the nation was not wholly a metaphysical speculation evolved out of his own brain as is almost universally supposed. The essentials of his plan, including the famous principle of the "concurrent majority" almost invariably attributed solely to him, were and had been for many years in actual and successful operation in South Carolina as the guiding principles of the Carolinian democracy.

Calhoun made no secret of this but acknowledged it frankly in his "Discourse on the Constitution and Government of the United States"; and, instead of diminishing his importance, the fact greatly increases it. It means that the plan which he offered the nation was not, as is generally believed, pure theory but on the contrary was based upon, and was an enlargement of, actual experiment and experience. What that experience was, how the system which he proposed for the nation actually worked in practice in one important unit of the Union, could have been found out if anyone had wished to do so.

But outside of the older South nobody had the wish to do this then. Different economic interests were driving the two older sections in different directions; and meanwhile the young West had come of age. Another South Carolinian, Andrew Jackson—a man whose way of thought was not that of the Rice Coast and who had left Carolina and become the leader of the West—had made a new thing out of the old Jeffersonian democracy, swinging it definitely away from the realistic channel into which the Carolinians sought to lead it.

The Jacksonian Revolution did not stop with Jackson's high if somewhat vague vision of justice for all. The Western horse that Old Hickory bestrode took the bit in its teeth; the concentrated uninformed city mobs in the industrial East increased; soon modern American democracy was in full stride, and the clash of the two rival philosophies, the one sentimental and the other realistic, was inevitable. It came and the Carolinian democracy, which by then was that of the whole South, was expunged from the American scene. The worst tragedy was not that a supreme effort to preserve the vital principle of local self-government was viewed (not unnaturally) by the world only as an effort to perpetuate slavery. Of even graver consequence was the fact that a last attempt to bring the noble ideal of democracy into accord with fundamental realities had failed because reality is not so alluring as the dreams men dream.

Since then the democracy of the Old South has been practically forgotten and, when not forgotten, has been misunderstood. Essentially realistic, it has been pictured as utterly romantic. Broadly generous in impulse and aim, it has been painted as the instrument of a selfish and oppressive class seeking to block human progress. These seventy years and more nobody has been interested in it because the system which supplanted it has seemed, to the uncritical eye at any rate, to be an enormous and permanent success. That is no longer the case. With startling suddenness we have discovered that American democracy is in serious straits and the signs accumulate that it can be saved, if at all, only by heroic revision in the direction of reality. Hence it may be possible at last to hope for a reconsideration of that rejected democracy of the Old South which was essentially a development of the Rice Coast's "way of thought" and is an integral part of the Rice Coast's story.

No detailed re-examination of it can be attempted here; in this brief review it is possible to touch upon only a few leading facts. Of these, by far the most important is the fact that out of the Rice Coast's "way of thought" emerged a form of democracy which was at once notably successful and genuinely democratic.

The statement will be challenged at once.* Nothing is more firmly fixed than the belief that the democracy of the Old South was in practice no democracy at all, that it repressed ruthlessly the lower strata of society and produced a civilization conducted for the benefit of the chosen few in which the "common man" had little or no opportunity.

This is supposed to have been true in special degree of South Carolina which is commonly considered to have been the most reactionary in government of all the States and which differed from all the others in the way in which power was distributed (through the apportionment of representation) in accordance with the principle of the "concurrent majority," later formally enunciated by Calhoun, rather than the numerical majority alone. Government in South Carolina was in substance a combination of manhood suffrage and property-holding (each checked by the necessity of obtaining the "concurrence" of the other) the practical effect of which was not only to create a balance of power between the two sections of the State despite the numerical superiority of the upper section, but also to retain the responsibility of government largely among those who had given some evidence of fitness.* Hence, more nearly than any other State, South Carolina approximated the Greek form of democracy as contrasted with the Jacksonian or modern American form; and in South Carolina, more than anywhere else in America, the "plain people" are supposed to have been repressed and denied opportunity by an entrenched and exclusive ruling class.

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* It will be said that the Old South, and particularly the old South Carolina, represented what is now called Fascism. Fascism implies a dictator and the complete submergence of individualism. The Old South had no dictator and would not tolerate one even in the crisis of war; and probably no people have ever been more individualistic than the Southerners. There was no enforced submergence of the individual in the State, but there was an extraordinary devotion to the State and nowhere was this devotion more intense than in South Carolina.

It is difficult to combat a belief which has hardened into a tradition, which was built up largely through a sincere though mistaken propaganda continued throughout the period of many years while the two opposing conceptions of democracy were confronting each other in the Union, and which had much to confirm it in the outward appearance of the Carolinian social structure. It will be pointed out, moreover, that the picture of the Rice Coast drawn in preceding chapters is the picture of an aristocracy. That is true in a sense; and it is true also that in every society of long standing, an upper class, an aristocracy of one sort or another, is developed. Nevertheless it seems to be a fact that this Carolinian system was at the very least fully as democratic in its practice and in its results as the system which destroyed and supplanted it, while in all other respects its results were incomparably superior. A study of the State's history from 1807, when its democracy assumed its characteristic form, until that form was destroyed as a result of the War between the States will show that the entrenched and exclusive aristocratic ruling class which is supposed to have repressed and denied opportunity to the "common man" is a figment of the imagination, the propagandist and the demagogue.

There is not space here for an extended study. Yet a mere roll-call of the men who held place and power in ante-bellum South Carolina will almost suffice to prove the point, since it will show at once how large a proportion of them came up from those lower strata which are supposed to have been so effectually repressed. To name only those that come immediately to mind, the first Wade Hampton, Langdon Cheves, George McDuffie, James L. Petigru, William Gilmore Simms, John B. O'Neall, William Harper, James H. Thornwell, James H.

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* See W. E. Schaper's "Sectionalism and Representation in South Carolina" and particularly W. W. Ball's excellent "The State That Forgot."

Hammond, B. F. Perry, Calhoun himself were men or the sons of men who had earned their right to leadership. These men (they include the son of an Indian trader, an apothecary's clerk, the son of an obscure school teacher from Massachusetts, and a Scotch-Irish "up-country" boy far removed in environment and temperament from the charmed circle of the Rice Coast) were none of them of the "aristocratic ruling class," yet they and others like them attained high place among the rulers and leaders of South Carolina in that very period when she is supposed to have held the door of opportunity most tightly shut against all who were not members of that class.

There is plenty of similar evidence which, however, can not be gone into here. The truth is that the constantly reiterated statement that the democracy of the Old South and of South Carolina in particular violated the cardinal American principle of equality of opportunity and was therefore no democracy at all is not supported by the record.* There was an upper class, as there always is, but it did not deny opportunity to those who were not of it. On the contrary, it was constantly and rapidly recruited by men of ability rising from below and it seems to have been, if anything, more receptive to such recruits, provided they had character and ability, than most upper classes. Much has been made of isolated instances such as the alleged snubbing of Simms in his earlier years by the social arbiters of Charleston. Social custom in the narrow sense is often a law unto itself, but any real difficulties which the young Simms actually encountered were evidently overcome and were probably due more to his own aggressive personality than to anything else. Certainly the personnel of the Carolinian leadership in every sphere reveals an amply sufficient proportion of "plain" men to refute the most serious (in fact the only serious) charge brought against the ante-bellum Carolinian democracy—that it was undemocratic.

Indeed, with the whole record before us, it seems not only possible but necessary to go further and conclude that the ante-bellum system was in its actual working more democratic, a better friend of the "plain people," than the democracy which destroyed and supplanted it.

As a study in comparative democracy the story of South Carolina is probably the most valuable and illuminating to be found in the Union because there the two systems have been tested thoroughly over long and approximately equal periods. For sixty-one years—from 1807, when the constitution of 1790 was amended, to 1868—the Carolinian or Old Southern type of democracy prevailed in South Carolina, and during those sixty-one years many South Carolinians, a large proportion of whom were of the plain people, found opportunity to become national figures in public life, known and respected far beyond the State's borders. In the slightly longer period since the Carolinian democracy was supplanted by the supposedly more democratic modern system, the number of South Carolinians, whether "common men" or "uncommon men," who have achieved a comparable eminence in public life has shrunk in lamentable degree. This is due not to deterioration of the State's human material but to the fact, vitally important though generally overlooked, that there is an intimate relation between good government and opportunity.

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* It is beside the point, of course, to cite the political status of the negro, which is substantially the same today as it was then.

So long as South Carolina had a better government than most, as she did have while the Carolinian system prevailed, she could compete successfully with larger and wealthier States. When that government of her own making was destroyed as a result of the Confederate War, her great advantage was lost and the degree of opportunity which her people of all classes had enjoyed was curtailed. Professing to increase opportunity for the "common man," the change from the old system to the new greatly restricted opportunity for all men of all classes who were unwilling or unable to practice the demagogue's arts—the men democracy needs. There have been exceptions, but they have been few. And there has come to the plain people of the State no compensating gain in other fields which would not have come with equal certainty if the Carolinian form of democracy had continued.*

These facts surely have more than a local interest. Over a period of one hundred and thirty years South Carolina has been in unique degree a testing ground for the two types of democracy which have contended in America; and the results of the test are decisive, its lessons are broadly applicable.

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* Among the many prophetic observations in the writings of Calhoun, the following may be noted at this point:

"So completely does the well-being of our race depend upon good government, that it is hardly possible any change, the ultimate effect of which should be otherwise, could prove to be a permanent good."

"Public and private morals are . . . nearly allied. That which corrupts and debases the community politically must also corrupt and debase it morally."

"To distribute power, then, solely in proportion to population would be, in fact, to give the control of the government, in the end, to the cities; and to subject the rural and agricultural population to that description of population which usually congregate in them—and, ultimately, to the dregs of their population."

They may be summed up briefly: Such phrases as "Equal eligibility of all to office" have only a make-believe magic. "Equal opportunity for all to make themselves fit for office" is not only a more intelligent but actually a more democratic definition of democracy; and in spite of much that has been loosely said and written to the contrary, it expresses pretty accurately the philosophy and practice of that democracy of the Old South of which South Carolina was the arche-type. How large was the Rice Coast's part in creating that democracy has been shown; and if, after long years, time is now revealing it as a far worthier achievement than has been supposed, the fact is surely the most dramatic and the most important in the Rice Coast's story.

The civilization of the plantations, of course, can never return. The fields of rice which Alice Smith has pictured, the life which her father describes, belong to the past. Even if that life had not been terminated violently it would have ended or been greatly altered by now; and there were features of it which none of us would willingly revive. Yet in its day it had not only great beauty but also great vigor, and though its physical body perished, its "way of thought" is certainly not dead unless indeed the whole struggle for democracy is already lost. Not as a pattern—for the world has changed since then—but because we need the same courageous realism which it derived from the realities that confronted it, the Rice Coast is worth looking back to. Those who see it only as a lovely but faded romanticism and perceive no reason except a sentimental one for looking back are blind to its true nature and meaning.

# A PLANTATION BOYHOOD

# A PLANTATION BOYHOOD

*From the Unpublished Reminiscences of* D. E. Huger Smith

## I

In my youth the journey from Charleston to our plantation on the Combahee was made in carriages, and usually lasted for two days, for we stopped for a night at a tavern kept by a "free person of colour" and his wife near the banks of the Edisto, where it was crossed by the Jacksonboro Ferry. The house was a large plantation residence which belonged to Mr. Charles Baring of an English family, noted then and now, and it was leased by Seymour. I can remember the very look of the place as we drove through the gate with its great brick pillars and by a circling drive up to the steps. I can remember old Seymour and his well-mannered wife coming out on the piazza to greet us with the easy and respectful cordiality of manner which belonged to a type that has ceased to exist.

The dining room of this "tavern" seems now before me with the long table and its white cloth, while the plates and dishes were of the blue and white Willow pattern.

The next morning, of the journey of forty-eight miles only about eighteen remained, but the first mile of the eighteen sometimes made a lasting picture. If there were a heavy freshet running down the Edisto River the causeway leading through the swamp would be under the black and swift-flowing waters. Carefully the carriages were driven down the hill and we entered a dark lane of water with a thick growth of cypress and gum trees on either side. We would splash along until about half way to the river we met the flat, which was then poled for the rest of the way through the swamp with the carriages safely perched upon it, until the river was reached and crossed. At the end of the journey we drove up the long avenue to the garden gate, and then by a curved road through the garden to the house-door, where we were greeted by Renty the cook and Hagar the dairy-woman, Cuffee the resident chief of the stable, and waiting-men and maids with "Huddy, Mossa" and "Huddy, Missis;" "Huddy, young Mossa" and hearty handshakes. For the plantation house had a retinue of servants of its own.

## THE PLANTATION.

There exists a plat of Smithfield, our plantation, made from surveys by John Fenwick in 1775 and by Joseph Purcell in 1785, at which latter date it consisted of one thousand, six hundred and ninety-four and one half acres. Of these, two hundred and thirty and three-quarter acres were "underbank" and cultivated in rice, and one hundred and forty-four acres (formerly rice-fields) were banked in as a reservoir. There were four hundred and sixty-nine and one-quarter acres of cleared highland used for provision-lands and pastures, and there were eighty-one and one-half acres of unimproved swamp and seven hundred and sixty-nine acres of woodland.

But by sundry sales and exchanges before 1851, the area of the plantation had been reduced, for it then only extended to about seven hundred and fifteen acres, of which two hundred and thirty-nine were swamp land and four hundred and seventy-six were highland.

It will thus be seen that it was rather a small plantation for that date, but the buildings and appointments were excellent. In addition to the seven hundred and fifteen acres there were two outlying tracts of land, one of one hundred acres on the Ashepoo-Combahee road, and another of five hundred acres in the Salkehatchie country up the river. These were timber-lands, where were cut the lumber used on the plantation and staves for the pounding-mill.

The residence was called by the negroes "the Great House," although by no means large. It was approached by two roads—one the main entrance from the Combahee road and the other leading from the Union Road through the provision lands to the stable, where it turned to the west and led past the carpenter's shop and saw-pit to the "settlement." The big gate was about a quarter of a mile from the house, and thence a road led by a somewhat imperfect avenue through the lawn to the garden-gate. This lawn was in fact a small park dotted with some fine oaks.

Between the garden-gate and the house was the rose-garden, laid out in formal beds, by which the road led to the east door of the house, intended as the main entrance but used only by visitors. Thence the road passed to the north of the house where it swept round a large circle past the north door and returned to itself at the northeast corner of the house. This circle was laid in grass and had in the middle of it a large stone sun-dial on a brick base with a bronze index.

Beyond the circle was the fence with a wild-orange screen or hedge which separated the garden from the "stable-lot," and of which the gate was exactly in front of the north door. Near this gate within the garden stood an ornamental dairy under and between two magnificent oaks, standing close to each other. Northeast of the house was a large kitchen building, which was screened from the house and circled by a dense but narrow growth of shrubbery. This concealed also the storehouse which stood against the fence of the stable-lot. South and southwest of the house the grounds were a shrubbery rather than a garden, though still called by that name. To the south the land sloped at first gently and then rapidly until it met the broad expanse of rice-fields, from which it was separated by a huge hedge of China Briar. West of the garden was the large vegetable garden in which were a number of pecan-nut trees.

A pathway just north of the vegetable garden led through a short avenue of Pride-of-India trees into a pasture through which, at less than a quarter of a mile, it reached the negro settlement, the overseer's house, sundry barns, and a great mule stable. In this pasture was the poultry yard with the poultry minder's house and the duck pond. Here also was the sheep house and at a little distance the church. West and south of the settlement lay rice-fields, and southward there was a long causeway leading to the barn-yard and mill, which were at the mouth of Batt's Creek near where it entered the river. The rice-lands were always divided into squares by banks (called check-banks) for the convenience of watering the rice. The squares at Smithfield were none of them square, their shape having been controlled by the lie of the land. Each square had an immemorial name. I remember a few of them:

Longfield, composed of several squares.
The Mill-Ponds.
"Upshay do' " square, which lay in front of the overseer's
    house, or door thus accounting for the name.
Tackum square.
Heyward square.
"Gaaden" square, which lay south of the garden.

Landing square.
Barnyard square.
Knoll square, etc.

The settlement of negro-houses was built in long rows with what were called streets between the rows, running north and south with a small square, in the middle of which stood the sick-house fronting south. In one end of this dwelt the sick-nurse. There were very rarely any sick in this house, and it was chiefly used as a day-nursery for the babies and children. On fine days there might be seen on the open ground before this house a large number of "fanner-baskets," and on each basket a folded blanket, and on each blanket a baby. Near each baby sat or played a small boy or girl who had been detailed to care for that especial baby, and at the door of the house sat Maum Judy, or later Kate, the Nurse, who, when not dozing, kept a watchful eye, lest perchance a baby might be neglected.

In the enclosure of the Overseer's house there were two large barns and a hand-mill of burr-stone which was used for grinding corn. A pole, caught near the edge of the upper stone, went through a hole in a barn above, and the power that drove the mill was a muscular arm, or perhaps two, applied thereto. Many a peck of corn was there ground by the combined force of my white arm and the dark one of a black playmate. The large barnyard near the river was on a sand knoll which had been enlarged and surfaced artificially. On this stood the great mill and three or four large barns, the winnowing house, the threshing floor, and the blacksmith's shop. The mill was an undershot water mill with a high wheel, which was driven by the outflow of the water from the millpond on the ebbing tide, while the Pond was filled again on the flood. This was called a tidal mill.

Ours had been built, and for many years had been worked, as a pounding-mill to separate the rice from the chaff, the rice having been threshed by the flail. But not long before the Civil War the then new-fangled machinery for a "thresher" had been attached to it, and the flail was thenceforward used only to thresh the seed-rice.

The rough-rice, or rice still in the husk, was thenceforward sent in schooners to the city to be pounded by toll-mills.

It was always a great pleasure to watch the loading of one of these schooners by long lines of men and women with baskets on the head, boarding the schooner by one plank and going ashore by the other. Close to the open hatchway stood the ten-bushel tub with the captain or mate on one side and the overseer or key-keeper on the other. As each darkey passed the tub she would tilt the basket and pour the golden rice into the tub. When the measure was full, it would be "struck" by passing over the top a smooth board and then tilted into the hold. With each tilt the striker would cry "one" or "two" or "three" or "four" or "tally," and the captain and the overseer would enter it accordingly. On some plantations the schooner could go up to the mill itself, and would be loaded through a long chute.

When the threshing-floor was in use it was an interesting sight. The large expanse was divided into parallelograms with hard and smooth surface of clay. Upon each would be laid a certain number of sheaves of rice in lines with the heads intermingled. At one, or at each end of the bed, stood a man or woman with a flail of the type that antedated the Bible, and with alternating blows struck the grain from the straw. When the whole gang was threshing the sound of the beating could be heard at a great distance.

The "taking up" of fresh land was going on steadily up to the war. The land on the Combahee had been much of it banked in before the Revolution, and nearly all the rest of it soon after. But on the Savannah great plantations were taken up between 1830 and 1840. As an instance, my uncle, Allen Izard, when he resigned from the United States Army, moved his negroes from Horse Savannah, one of the heads of the Stono, to his Recess plantation on the Savannah River. Here he planted the first year something like three hundred acres; but before 1860 he had carried a huge canal nearly three miles through the swamp, and was planting nearly twelve hundred acres all banked and drained, and cleared of the cypress growth after a fashion. My father and his brother, Pringle Smith, owned jointly the Beech Hill plantation and by 1860 it had been cleared and drained nearly to the high land, only some two or three hundred acres remaining in cypress growth. My grandfather, Judge Huger, had also taken up lands on the Savannah River. He had inherited from his father a plantation on the Wateree. Through this ran a fine stream of water with a considerable fall to it, on which he intended to build a cotton-mill, sending one of his sons to Massachusetts to study cotton-spinning.

## II

## The Social Life of the Plantation.

The overseer and his family were of course white. I can remember quite a succession of them, some resident and some non-resident. Where the overseer was non-resident there was always an assistant, who was sometimes called the Keykeeper.

The overseer was an expert cultivator, while the Keykeeper was a student of the business, and generally quite young. Mr. Groce was the overseer at my grandmother's place on Ashepoo, and soon after my father's death Smithfield also was put under his charge. The two plantations were about nine miles apart, and he rode over to Smithfield two or three times a week. Mrs. Groce was a dear motherly old woman, and could make the finest sausage I ever eat. Both she and "old Groce," as we called him, spoiled us frightfully, and he built a special cart in which we children drove old Bulley (i.e., Bullet) all about the Ashepoo country. Their daughter, Miss Anna, was an attractive girl six or seven years older than myself, who reappeared much later in our lives when her son came to my brother Robert's plantation as an overseer.

By the way, I ought to mention that Mr. Groce was a preacher in the Methodist Church, and I remember very well listening to sermons by him in the plantation church at Ashepoo.

Of the negroes on the plantation the most important was the Driver, who was a very high dignitary indeed. He bore when on duty his emblem of authority. This was a whip with a tapering hickory handle, reaching from the right hip across his back to the level of the left ear. From this a long plaited lash came across his chest to find the end of the handle at his hip, whence passing around his waist it returned to the handle where it was fastened with a fancy loop or two. I assure you it made a very creditable appearance and would have been admired even by Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe.

Law and order had to be maintained throughout the country-side, and each plantation was run with a due regard to both, the police being represented in small matters by local authority.

It must be understood that the planter had the right of "la basse justice et la moyenne" on his own plantation. "La haute justice" was reserved to a State court. For petty crime or default the punishment was a more or less sound thrashing administered by the Driver in the presence of the Overseer or Master. Up to 1868 the same punishment was administered to whites guilty of the smaller offenses. In the case of a white man it was inflicted by sentence of a court in the market place under the eye of the sheriff or his deputy.

The jurisdiction of the master over the slave for small offenses did not cease in the city, but was inflicted in an orderly way by a police officer at a public institution called the work-house.

I never saw old Anson take off his whip except to let me "crack" it. Nor did I ever see any driver use his whip; but once or twice the whispered gossip of the plantation told me of an inflicted punishment and the offense.

Old Anson was very black with a very white head. He stood tall and almost straight in spite of his many years, and his manner was both respectful and commanding. In his extreme old age he was given an assistant named Handy, and thenceforward there were two drivers, each with his badge of office, in attendance when the gang paid the Sunday visit to the Great House. Though relieved of the duties of driver, he never relinquished the insignia, but like a retired field-marshal he attendel the leeves in uniform. Handy did not hold his post very long. For some offense or other he was broken, and exiled to our plantation on Savannah River.

He was succeeded by Nat, an excellent fellow, who long after the war met his death from a railroad engine at Green Pond station.

Occasionally a driver was entrusted with the management of a plantation. When we rode to visit my grandmother Smith on the Ashepoo, we used to leave our horses at a Bellinger plantation, and thence were put across the river in a boat. The driver here was an old black man whom we always called Tom Bellinger, and he was in supreme control. His white keykeeper was his subordinate. Old Tom Bellinger or his wife never failed to greet us with extreme hospitality.

Our uncle Lowndes' plantation, Oakland, was a very large one, and on it were three settlements, Cedar Hill, Buncombe, and Laurel Spring, each with its ruling driver.

Just as a department store has its manager and its floor-walkers, so the plantations had its overseer and drivers; or, to make another comparison, the master was the colonel, the overseer was the adjutant, and the drivers were the troop-captains.

The next grade was composed of the head-carpenter, the head-ploughman, the trunk-minder and the blacksmith. The carpenters included also the coopers and wheelwrights.

At Smithfield there were six or eight carpenters besides their "boys," who were learning the trade. The head-man was named Isaac. I well remember the interest with which I watched them making a wheel. And then the saw-pit would today seem a curiosity! A tall pine tree would be cut down in the woods and there trimmed. Then it would be suspended by chains under the running gear of an ox-cart with the hind wheels far separated from the forewheels. Then three or four or more yokes of oxen would slowly draw the heavy weight to the pit. Here expert axmen with broad axes would square the timber, cutting off the bark and sap wood. The saw pit was a broad ditch over which on posts was a frame work of beams, making a parallelogram. Upon this the timber was hoisted and the head-carpenter carefully marked on it the lines of the cuts. A carpenter mounted on the frame and another below pulled the long coarse saw up and down.

Billy was the head-ploughman, and a very able one. I remember our buying once a half-dozen unbroken mules, and Billy was promised an extra and superior suit of clothes, if he broke them all without a gall. By George, it was fun! The boys would harness up three old mules and one young one. They and we would mount upon the wagon and Billy take the reins. Leaving the plantation by one road and returning by the other meant a circuit of about three or four miles. On our return an old mule was taken out and a second unbroken one put in. The first two turns were exciting—but mildly so! On the third turn we had three of the wild mules and one broken one. This turn we wondered whether we would ever get home. We did so, and then harnessed up a fourth wild mule. This time the fun was furious and certainly fast. The mules bolted from the very start; we carried away the first gate post; down the road we careened, taking in the whole width of it, while Billy stood erect in the front of the wagon, leaning back on his "lines" (i.e., reins) and putting out his whole strength to hold the mules to the road. Behind Billy in the wagon were three or four plough boys and two or three "nyoung maussas" standing, sitting, clutching, lying, rising, and holding on, while we worked our way back to home and safety. The next day and the next we went through the same programme, but each day it became less and less interesting to the small boys.

The trunk-minder was an official of great importance. He regulated the flow of water on the rice-fields.

The water was of course under the control of the overseer, but the constant handling of the work was the trunk-minder's duty, and was certainly no sinecure. Not only was the responsibility great, but the attention to the work had to be incessant by day and night.

The trunk-minder at Smithfield was an old negro called Miller Renty, who combined with these duties the running of the mill in the pounding or threshing season, and had the general control of the barnyard, for the safety of which he was responsible. In the last capacity he had always in his possession one of the plantation muskets. These were old army muskets with flint locks, very large and heavy. They were used by the bird-minders, who in the planting season patrolled the fields, firing frequent blank charges to keep the birds moving. This was even more necessary when the rice was "in the milk," for then it was that the festive rice-bird put in his work. Clutching a rice-stalk just below the ear he would rapidly squeeze each separate soft grain, leaving the chaff clinging to the stalk. By this injury to the crop, he fitted himself as a most delicious addition for the planter's table.

The cow-minder was named Pinckney and was a great chum of ours. He was born in Africa—a Gullah negro—and came from the Gold Coast as a boy. Many an hour have I sat by his side on a log while his cattle grazed through the woods, and listened to his wondrous tales of life and adventure in that land of plenty and of liberty. Of course he was the son of a king, but never could explain why his own father sold him to the traders! Of course gold was there so plentiful that one had only to stoop to pick it up on the roadside. (Why roadside I thought!) Of course his liberty and freedom were "*horrifically*" grand, for none dared to awaken him when he slept! Such a malefactor met promptly a deservedly bloody death. "I been nuse to kill um!" said the very mild and agreeable old Pinckney of Combahee, as he straightened up, and his gentle old eyes looked fiercely into mine for the admiration which was his due. He taught me a good many words of the Gullah language, of which but one remains in my memory. I will spell it phonetically thus, "tsgungah." Now if that does not mean tobacco, you must call down old Pinckney's wraith and not me; for in my most secret soul I used to wonder sometimes whether he invented the Gullah tongue or remembered it.

The cow-minder resided at the "hog crawl," which lay just outside of the fence that surrounded the cornfields or provision-land. Its further edge sloped to a small swamp or pond which was included in its area.

The name seems to have come from "Kraal," a Dutch-Portuguese-African word for a cattle-pen. It has no affinity to the English word meaning "to creep," even though it has borrowed that spelling. The word was in very general use in the first days of Carolina, almost interchanging with "cattle-pen," which meant a range for cattle, the raising of which was an early occupation of the colony.

The flock of sheep was followed by a shepherd, whose name I have entirely forgotten. They were housed every night. But the cattle, as soon as the highland crop was harvested, were penned without shelter every night in a frequently moved pen of pine-rails. The ground within the pen was deeply covered with many loads of rice-straw hauled thither from the barnyard. Likewise the floor of the mule-stable and the sheep-pen were daily covered with fresh straw thrown upon the older litter. These were valuable plantation assets, as they furnished the fertilizer for the upland crops, and were usually dug out for the purpose to the depth of several feet. The commercial fertilizer was then unknown, although I remember a purchase of Peruvian guano as an experiment.

The poultry woman was an important functionary. I remember two of them. The first was Lucy, the mother of Billy the ploughman. She was a fat old woman and I think very justly suspected of dealing in poultry when the family was in town. However, she was retired for age, and Willoughby was promoted in her place to the advantage of the poultry yard. About the same time the yard was moved to a spot on the edge of Long Field, the canals of which were a fine swimming pool for the ducks and geese.

You must remember that we were forty-eight miles from a market, with horses for transportation and were therefore dependent on the hog-pen, the sheep, and the poultry yard for our meals. To these there was added an abundant supply of fish and game.

In the poultry yard were turkeys and ducks and geese and guinea-fowl, and sometimes pea-fowl, although the last I do not remember at Smithfield. In our flock of geese there was a veritable wild goose whose wing had been broken by old Dorset. I do not remember Dorset, who had been trunk-minder when the place belonged to my grand-uncle, Mr. Mason Smith, but his goose lived until the War swept over the plantation.

Education on the plantation was carried to a high point, and the negro learned thoroughly what he was taught.

I do not believe that any New Englander could plow a furrow as straight as some of our boys. I have never seen a ditcher who could sink a quarter-drain like any "full-hand," straight up and down, as broad at the bottom as at the top, the sides and bottom as smooth and even as a billiard-table. Such carpenters do not exist now; from cutting down the pine-trees to hanging the window blinds they built the great house and the barns and the mill and all the other houses. They could glance at the sun and tell within ten minutes that it was the dinner hour. They could build a "trunk," and set a "trunk," and mend a break in a river-bank. In fine they did anything and everything well except reading and writing. The few who had such knowledge used it badly.

## III

The work on the Plantation was of three classes:

First, task work,
Second, gang work, or as the negroes called it "from sun to sun,"
Third, tidal work, such as depended on the running of the mill.

I will take them up separately. Most of the work was by task. A half-acre was called a task in the rice field and every square was measured into tasks. The young negroes were called "half-hands" and were allotted a half-task; those still younger, and yet too old to be kept as nurses to the babies were "quarter-hands." When at task work, it was seldom that any negro stayed in the field up to two o'clock, and most would have completed a day's work by one P.M.

The gang work was of such things as burning stubble, breaking in the corn crop, loading a schooner or such other work as could not be divided into tasks. The mill work depended on the tides. As soon as the water in the river got so low as to allow a fall from the mill ponds the work would commence and continue until the rise of the tide brought up the level of the river to the mill-race.

In splitting rails the task was one hundred rails a day—not hard work to an expert axman. The fences were made of these rough pine rails laid in panels one on the other. When the fence reached a certain height two rails (one on each side) would be set in the earth where these panels joined and the upper ends crossed and on top a single rail was placed which was called a "rider." A perfect or legal fence had to be "horse high, bull strong and hog tight." This style of fence was called a "worm-fence." Any one had the right of pasturage over unenclosed land, and each planter had to "fence out" cattle by enclosing his own fields.

The gang was aroused at daybreak each morning by the driver's horn or conch, and on some plantations by a bell. Of a still morning the sound of these horns could be heard from plantation to plantation up and down the river.

The nursing mothers were relieved of much of the work, and at stated hours would be seen coming out of the field in a crowd for their maternal duties.

At the planting and harvest seasons the quarter-hands and the larger children would be added to the gun-men as bird-minders with various devices to keep the birds flying, for the aristocratic rice-bird had to sit down to his meals. This bird-minding was rather fun, and I often joined the band and added my shrill voice and the crack of my whip to their yells and whip-cracking and shingle-clattering so as to swell the useful noise.

After one or two o'clock the hands had the rest of the day to themselves and could work their own fields and gardens, or idle at their will. Many of them were expert basket-makers for which on every plantation there was a demand. Some of the men were excellent coopers, and the "piggins" and buckets used on the plantations were mostly made there. The usual drinking vessel for the negroes was a gourd—otherwise called a calabash. This grew on vines which ran along every garden fence. The vine, being an annual, died at the end of the summer and the calabashes were allowed to dry on the vine. The smaller ones took the place of cups, etc., and the larger ones were used as pails for water or to hold grain and other things. Before use they had to be boiled a long time to extract the bitterness.

Each negro was allowed to plant for his own profit an allotment of rice-land and one of highland, and each house had near it its own small vegetable garden enclosed with clap-boards, and also a fowl house, and often a pig-pen; their pigs were not allowed to run out, though I seem to remember too many pigs around the settlement for me to believe that this was strictly enforced.

The negroes had no surnames to the knowledge of the owners. But among themselves they thus dignified each other, calling the names "titles." Thus, I remember a certain negro who was called Peter Polite. Old Hagar called herself Miss Kittle, in which you *may* recognize the well-known Carolina name of Cattell.

Many of their names were of African origin: Quaw, Quakoo, Quash, Cuffee, Pino(?), Mandigo, Cudjo, etc.

There were numerous Gods and Goddesses: Juno, Jupiter, Flora, Diana, Neptune, Hercules (called "Hecklus"), Aphrodite, shortened into Affey, and others. But of course the Jacks and Jims, Bens and Marys and other common English names predominated.

A number bore well-known Carolina names as their given names. From Lord

Anson probably came that name borne by no less than three negroes on the place —old Anson—young Anson—and little Anson. There was old Dorset, once trunk-minder, Simmons the carpenter, Blake a plough-boy. Vincent, and old Pinckney the cow-minder and others. The poultry-woman was called Willoughby, having probably derived her name from forefathers who came from Barbadoes, where they were owned by one or another of the great Willoughby family.

The name Cumsey was probably once Tecumseh; Rhina, Minty and Teena, Libby, and Renty must be referred to an etymologist.

Where two bore the same name, one or both had a descriptive addition. Thus Cook Renty could not be confused with Miller Renty, nor Old Lucy with New-comer Lucy.

And too I remember at Ashepoo a Rabbit Dick and a Little Dick.

## Rations.

The rations were called "lowance" (allowance).

I cannot remember what rations were issued weekly. This was done by the overseer at one of the barns in his lot. I think each got a peck of corn (which they were expected to grind themselves) a certain quantity of bacon, peas, molasses, rice, sweet potatoes, salt fish and in season fresh vegetables from the plantation garden.

The more thrifty negroes raised for themselves a number of chickens and pigs, and all of them grew corn and rice on their own allotments of provision-lands. Many of them had bee-hives. The provision-land of the drivers was always worked for them by the gang.

It is evident that they thus had, all of them, much more than they could consume, and to allow them to dispose of their surplus a plantation-shop was established. At this they were able to get Charleston prices for corn or rice, for chickens and eggs, honey, peas, ground-nuts, or whatever else they might produce, while on the other hand they took in trade at wholesale prices, calicos and shawls, and tobacco, and stockings, and salt fish, and red-herrings, and molasses, and such other things as might seem to be luxuries in their simple lives. This system was supposed to encourage among them not only thrift but also initiative and it gave them the pleasure of variety and choice. In a small way a good deal of money circulated among the negroes, both in the country and in the towns.

With necessary clothing they were well provided. Twice a year they were given the cloth for suits of clothes, either blue or grey woolens. These were imported from England and, as by an invoice before me, cost that year sixty-five cents per yard for "English Grey"—for "Grey Llewyns" fifty-five cents a yard, "Blue Llewyns" sixty cents a yard. The caps were three dollars a dozen; handkerchiefs three dollars a dozen; "Marlboro Stripes" were eleven and one-half cents a yard; shoes were one dollar and twenty-five cents a pair; blue thread, seventy-five cents a pound; needles at twenty-five cents (a paper I suppose); "Browns" eight cents a yard; "Plaid Marlboro" twelve and one-half cents a yard; and "English Blue" seventy-five cents a yard. There were also "Shetucket Stripes" twelve and one-half cents a yard, and other things.

To each driver were given eight yards of blue woolen—two shirts, one cap—two pair woolen stockings and one and one-half yards of lining for coats—and a great-coat.

To each "length" of cloth were always attached needles, thread, and buttons. Each man got also a woolen cap (sometimes like a liberty cap, sometimes the shape of a Scotch cap)—also cloth for shirts. The shoes were selected by a curious system. Each negro would hand in at the proper time his "shoe-stick" of the proper length. These were marked and laid up in a bundle, and each stick was inserted by the shoe dealer in a shoe of the size it called for, where it stayed until the distribution.

Instead of caps the women were given large handkerchiefs which were folded into turbans. Blankets were given out every third year to each negro.

## IV

In every neighborhood there was a country-doctor, who made a very good living out of his plantation practice. The method of paying for medical attendance varied. Sometimes it was, by contract, a fixed price per annum. Sometimes they were paid for each visit. But it may easily be seen that this was a considerable item in the annual expense. All the doctors whom I remember were of the same class as the planters. Many of the planters themselves had taken a course in medicine. Those were the days of slow travel, and a more or less general knowledge of the ordinary diseases was necessary at "the great house." The master and mistress were not the usual worthy heads of their own little community unless they had fitted themselves to protect and comfort their people. There is a letter from my uncle (not an M.D., however) to his sister-in-law, my mother. He was at the plantation on the Savannah River which was owned jointly by them. He begs her not to be so distressed about his being there through a hot summer. He did not fear the malaria, and the terrible outbreak of cholera that so alarmed her made it absolutely necessary for him to remain. He said the disease was hard to combat, but that at least he could cheer his poor people while they lived, and comfort them when they were dying.

All the planters of the Combahee neighborhood were Episcopalians, and they had a very pretty brick church which stood in the woods on the road-side about a mile and a half from Smithfield, and which was used by the families who drove, some of them, many miles to attend service.

Before that was built we attended the Ashepoo church eight miles away, which stood the sole vestige of the colonial town or village of Edmondsbury.

The religion of the negroes was seldom controlled by the masters. On our plantation the negroes were all Methodists, as were those of most of the plantations in our neighborhood. On each plantation there was a church, and a number of planters combined to pay the salary of a clergyman appointed by the Methodist Conference. This gentleman preached at each plantation on a certain number of

Sundays in each month, driving in a "buggy" from place to place. How many services he held on the same day I cannot remember, but they were many. He would arrive at one plantation of a Saturday afternoon where he would spend the night as the guest of the owner, and after breakfast held there a service. Then away he would drive to the next, and so on through his allotted number. He would be the guest at dinner where the dinner-hour found him, and would sleep where night overtook him.

On each plantation there was a sable functionary called a leader, appointed by the minister, who was responsible for the local religious welfare. At our place the leader was John the carpenter, and a very loud leader he was. Our church stood certainly more than an eighth of a mile from the Great House, yet I can well remember a night when the welkin rang with groans and shrieks high above which could be heard John's shouts and yells as he forced home the doctrines of his church. I remember the religious discussion which took place between his "Missis" and John, when he was summoned to the great house the next day. John assured his "Missis" that such fervor was necessary to attract the attention of the Deity while "Missis" told John that a whisper or even a silent prayer was just as efficacious. John retired unconvinced, but it was noticeable that the order, in the shape of a request, emanating from her who controlled "la basse justice et la moyenne," had the effect of modifying John's theory of prayer.

The body of our church was occupied by the black congregation, while on one side of the reading desk, seats were railed off for the family, and on the other for the overseer and his family. The congregation was summoned by a bell, which hung in the little wooden tower of the church.

But it must not be supposed that John the leader could induce our negroes entirely to accept "shoutings" as a substitute for dances. I have attended both many times, and am competent to describe them. Shouting was a religious dance, the music of which was supplied by the lookers-on singing in a high-key a religious song. I remember a verse or two of one of them.

"I look to de eas'—an' I look to de wes'
  An' I see de chariot a-comin'!
Fo(ur) grey hosses all in de lead
  To lan' you on de udder side o' Jordan!

"Moses in de bull-rushes fas' asleep!
Playin' possum in de two bushel basket!
Ebery hair on e' head was a penny wort of candle
To light you on de udder side o' Jordan!"

In time to this inspiring music in rather quick rhythm shuffled a ring of negroes, chiefly women as I remember, dancing without any fancy steps, but with an indescribable swaying motion of the hips. Every now and then one or another would fall out of the ring half exhausted, when their places were filled by others, and the whole was punctuated by an occasional yell of religious emotion.

Quite different was the secular dance. The music was a fiddle assisted by "sticks" and "bones." Every one has heard the clatter of the "bones" as handled by an "end-man," but the joyous beat on the floor of a pair of sticks, as rendered by a plantation darkey, invites to the dance. Their dances were nought but jigs. The dusky swain would grip the hand of the darksome belle. One swirl of both bodies under the arch of their arms and then they fell apart and made their "steps" face to face. I remember Rabbit Dick's variations. Three or four steps, and then down on one knee he fell. A pleading look, and up he bounced; then a few steps and down on the other knee. Oh! he was a grand success! Tony Poinsett, who waited at my grandmother's table in town took me aside to explain that Rabbit Dick danced pretty well for a "country nigger," but that he (Tony) danced "more elegant like de town-nigger." And then supper! This was a feed, the largest part of which came from "Missis"; but yet each participant was a willing contributor. Whiskey was surely absent, for none might sell it to a dark skin under a heavy penalty. I remember once riding over to Oakland and meeting my Uncle Lowndes near his gate. He had dismounted from his horse and stood over a half dozen jugs and demi-johns with a lifted gold-headed stick while two sad-looking "sandlappers" and a small covered wagon stood by Bang! went the stick, and a demi-john wept alcoholic tears. Whack! went the stick and a jug was riven. Bang! Bang! Whack! Whack! and through a lot of broken glass and pottery there ascended to heaven the aroma dear to prince and peasant, but especially enticing to Afric's sons. I have often wondered whether the old gentleman too had not broken a law—but you may safely bet I did not ask him!

## V

I THINK the only law regulating the marriage of negroes was plantation custom. But however this might be, I know that at Smithfield there existed the true South Carolina marriage at Common Law. The ceremony might be performed by a minister (or leader), but the marriage was by mutual consent. Once married they were married for good and all, and they abode together until death parted them, and bred up "chillen" with great pride over the size of their families.

If there were cases of marital unfaithfulness, they were never heard of up at the great house, for the punishment for quarrels growing out of such things, was understood to be the most severe known to the gang. They would be sold off of the plantation! I never knew it inflicted, but I once heard it threatened when Bill and Sary made an irregular marriage of a temporary kind. The driver was ordered to assign a house to the couple and they were warned of the penalty in case there might be further trouble. I do not know whether the leader or the minister then called a blessing upon them, but I do know they remained a faithful couple until Billy ran away during the War.

Some times the weddings were grand affairs. The accompanying merriment consisted chiefly of eating.

Marriage to a negro who did not belong to the plantation was very much discouraged but was sometimes permitted. In this case the couple of course lived where the woman belonged, because by law the children always went with the mother. Among decent people, when a gang of negroes was sold, great care was always taken to keep families together.

It might be well to mention here that there was in my recollection only one mulatto at Smithfield. She was old Judy, I think, the wife of the driver, old Anson, and was the Nurse of the plantation when I first remember it.

A great deal of nonsense has been written about the cross-breeding of the races in the period of slavery. In fact, on the plantations the percentage of mulattoes was very small. Of course there were more in the cities, but yet today

(1913) *the negro race in the State remains black.* The reverse of this is equally true of the whites at the South. The percentage of black blood that has crept into them is infinitely small even among the lower classes. It is probable that there was a greater intermingling of races at the North, where it was permitted, if not encouraged, than at the South where it was frowned upon and prohibited.

Billy, as I have said, was the only runaway from Smithfield. On Ashepoo plantation there *was* a runaway—at least he was on the plantation whenever it suited him *not* to be a runaway. I think he spent most of his time in the woods, though doubtless constantly visiting the settlements. The runaway was a sort of hobo or tramp. He lived on gifts from his brethren and thefts from the whites without labor and without thought.

After many years this especial runaway returned openly to his house and home, took his punishment and settled down to an orderly life. You see, he had become old and rheumatic. I remember both him and his end very well. The wandering spirit never entirely left him, and at the last he slipped away to pay a visit on the Combahee. About half way he lay down near the roadside and died peacefully.

One other runaway comes to my mind, whose story was infinitely more tragic. He belonged to a neighbor of ours, whose overseer came across him accidentally not very far from the Combahee church. He had a plantation musket with him and promptly shot the overseer, who lived just long enough to tell the story. After a long hunt for him he was captured by two or three negroes whose sympathy had been blunted by his crime, and one of whom the desperate savage almost cut to pieces with a hatchet. This story was told to me by Cook Renty.

There was little interference with the individual lives of the negroes so long as good order was maintained and they did their work; and of course they moved about *on the plantation* at will, precisely as white people would in a New England village. But the law of the land restricted them to their home plantation unless they had a permit, called a "ticket," from owner or overseer. There had survived an institution called the patrol, which might at any time be met by a wandering negro, and whose commander might ask troublesome questions, but as the patrol was composed of the planters and overseers of each neighborhood every negro was known to one or another of them and hence they did not interfere with anyone known to be of that section, unless indeed his own master wanted to know what he was doing there. Thus the intercourse between neighboring plantations was practically free and very easy. Nevertheless a negro of one plantation married to a negress of another was expected to carry with him a written permit to pass at will to and fro. I doubt very much if he ever did!

When I was a boy of about nine years of age, my brother Bob and I once "rode patrol." We did not then understand that it was a joke of our Uncle's. Riding on our ponies up to his house, we found him mounting his horse, and were asked by him to go with him. At the gate of the Laurel Spring plantation we met a gathering of about twenty men and one of them called a roll. At a certain name my uncle answered, "Mr. Robert Smith rides as his substitute,' and at another I was designated. This was one of the grandest things that ever happened to me. At the word of command the patrol formed in two ranks and rode off by the right flank headed by the Commander and the rear by two small boys. After a ride of two or three hours, the patrol was halted, orders for the next meeting given, and we were then dismissed. I have never thought that the moral effect of the "patterroll" was at all injured by the entire absence of weapons and the size of two of the "men."

"Run, nigger, run! de patterroll gwine ketch you" was one of their merry songs.

High justice was administered to the negroes by what were called "Magistrate's Courts." These were presided over by two justices of the peace or magistrates, and with them sat no less than three, or more than five, freeholders of the district. Negroes were examined as witnesses, but they were not put under oath. This was the case always in those days with negro testimony. It was never under oath and was only considered of value when corroborated.

These two conditions might to-day well be re-enacted, viz.: a prompt trial by freeholders, and the doing away with useless oaths. My experience in the court is that the lower classes of whites are seldom bound by them and the negroes never, while a man of honor would tell the truth whether sworn or not.

## Our Life on the Plantation.

I remember one winter spent wholly at Smithfield, and then we had with us a tutor, Mr. Carstens, a German who had come to the South for his health. It was to him we owed an out-of-door gymnasium of a sort, consisting of a horizontal bar, parallel bars and posts for the "high jump." When lessons were over, he would exercise us here in various ways, and indeed this teaching was of great benefit to us, for the bars remained many years after he left, and we never entirely ceased to use them.

Poor Carstens was dreadfully afraid of a horse, but rode a little every day for the exercise on a pony named Pet. She had plenty of sense. Carstens would daily mount her in the stable-lot and she would carry him at a gentle canter about a quarter of a mile up the road. Here she always stopped. Not one step further would she take, but would gleefully canter back to the stable. There turning her, he would ride again to her halting place, and back and forth they would go many times until he had enough. To help him out I once or twice went to the stopping place, and mounted in his place to show him that it required only nerve and a whip to teach Pet who was master. Mounting again, he would summon his nerve in vain, ply the whip once or twice while Pet flicked her ears, and then give in. I think he feared a fall in the weak state of his lungs!

I usually rode Pet, and Bob rode a marsh-tackey named Jim, who was for his size a fine jumper and a fast pony for a quarter of a mile.

At Oakland Bob and I more than once rode races from the Oakland Church to the line of the piazza for the amusement of guests, of whom there were many in that house. I was beaten once in a fine race witnessed by a bevy of Northern ladies, the daughters of Mr. Rawlins Lowndes of New York, and by others. Perhaps it was the same year that Bob on Jim beat a handsome black Canadian pony belonging to "Cap'n Bill" Heyward, and ridden by his nephew, a young New Yorker named Cutting. Bob's girth broke at the very end of the race and he bit the dust, but not before he had handsomely won to the gratification of his backers.

In 1854 there was a fine race between Dan Huger of New Orleans and a Combahee man. This took place on the main road about a mile from the Oakland gate. Bob, not yet ten, and I, not yet nine, were engaged to dine that day with the Burnets down the river, and of course we broke the engagement to see the race, and it was well worth it. Nevertheless, the *next* day we rode for dinner to the Burnet plantation, and then and there qualified for admission to the Ananias Club founded lately by Theodore Roosevelt. Our faltering and flimsy excuses were heard with a pleasant smile by old Mr. Burnet of courtly manner, and we felt fully reassured, until he covered us with confusion by saying, "Now tell us about the race!"

I can remember too, dear old Mrs. Burnet made a semi-apology for the simplicity of the dessert by telling us of yesterday's plum pudding. Alas, how hard it is to deceive people even when it is for their own good! There were three highbred colts reared in my time at Smithfield, the two older by Eclipse out of Leta, and the youngest also out of Leta by a sire whose name I have forgotten. This last was named Paddy Whack and was a roan. He barely lived until he was broken, and his death was a great distress. His elder brothers were sorrels, the eldest called Eclipse after his sire, and the younger Felix. Eclipse was sold to my uncle Allen Izard and Felix was our buggy horse. Why he did not break our necks I do not know, for he was a confirmed runaway.

To pass from a thoroughbred to a drove of donkeys seems like a decline and fall.

I think there were seven of them. There was Bob, and Sam, and Fleur-de-Marie (usually called Fleurdy) and Sally and Billy and two forgotten.

Donkeys are great fun driving cows, so we would mount, always bare-back, sitting well on the hindquarters—each would have two small darkies with "hickories" "to mek dem donkey go"—and away to the piney woods with our running grooms hustling behind us. Here, meeting old Pinckney, we would hasten the stride of his cattle and have them in the pen before the old man woke up to his loss, for fifteen or twenty small fry on feet and four or five "buckra" boys on donkeys could surely make any cattle hustle. Then away to the milker's shed for a draft of warm milk.

The dairy was in full sight of the north windows of the house. Its door was opened by a key to fit the ancient baronial castle lock of romance, and Maum Hagar, the dairy-woman, was a very tiny woman. Every morning soon after daylight she used to trot along a broad walk leading from her habitation in the kitchen to the dairy, holding the huge key clasped to her bosom. One very cold morning Bob and I watched her progress over the ground, white with hoar-frost, and decided that the dairy was of such strategic value that it behooved us to occupy it. Clad in our white night garments (pajamas then were not), we scurried noiselessly across the circle and surprised old Maum Hagar in the act of unlocking the door. It took only a few seconds to lift her by her elbows and to set her yards away, then to enter the dairy and to lock the door on the inside. I remember distinctly that the pans of milk were slightly frozen and that the chilled cream was delicious. We did not spoil it by haste, but skimmed a number of pans with great care, drinking it as we skimmed.

Meantime poor old Hagar alternately put her eye and mouth to the keyhole, through which she shrieked alternately blame and threats. "You bad boys!!!! Le' my cream alone!!! I gwine tell yo' ma!!! You ain' gwine lef' no cream for Missis' breakfuss!!! Yo' ma gwine lick you!!! How I gwine chu'n ef you eat up all my cream!! I gwine for yo' ma right now!! 'E gwine lick you sho' !!"

But our "ma" was in bed, and could not arrive at the scene of action before our retreat, and we knew it! Likewise cream in praesenti outweighed Hagar's verba and even my mother's verbera in future. Having drunk our fill now, we wished to evacuate the post. But Hagar still knelt at the keyhole. Turning the key we quickly opened the door, and, one on each side, we hastily lifted the old Mauma into the dairy and locked her inside. Her previous threats were absolutely nothing in comparison with the commination she now poured forth as we watched her through the keyhole, examining her pans. Then turning the key gently we unlocked the door and went back to our room where we carefully said our morning prayers.

I don't think dear old Hagar ever told on us! Certainly we never got the well-deserved "licking."

Alas, oh Postumus! The fugacious years are gliding by and such memories come to me over three-fifths of a century, a period that was full of action and vicissitudes, and yet, as I tell them, a chuckle replaces the merry laugh which belonged to them.

Yet one other such prank!

My father had inherited from his Uncle and Aunt, Mr. and Mrs. Mason Smith, an old man named Frank, who was their Butler—and when I say butler, I mean Butler with a big *B*, not an idealized serving-man. At the break up of his town-establishment Frank passed into the service of my grandmother Smith. He was bald, short, and fat. His chief duty, as I remember it, was to stand behind my grandmother's chair at dinner, whence he watched Tony and Primus who waited, and Isaac who wielded the fly-brush. The rest of the time he chiefly dozed, in summer on a sofa in the cellar just under his pantry, or in winter before the kitchen fire. You therefore understand that Frank was a *very* dignified majordomo. Now Frank liked Christmas for its good will and good cheer, but hated the fire works and dreaded the fire crackers, dear to a small boy of my day. Likewise Frank's habitual wear was not the usual livery of the house-servant but a black broadcloth suit, the coat of which was the predecessor of and looser and fuller than its descendant, the dress-coat of to-day. In the tails of this coat there were roomy pockets.

On the evening then of a very merry "Chris'muss" at Ashepoo you may imagine Frank dozing on a bench before the glowing fire in the kitchen, dreaming of the fine dinner served at the table of "ole Missis" and finished up by the servants. Opposite to him dozed the cook, who had prepared and also partaken of this dinner. Everything was still and peaceful. Half a pack of Chinese crackers with lighted fuse by some inexplicable freak of fortune got into Frank's pocket. A half-minute of intensity, and then bang! went the first cracker, and Frank and Jim the cook leaped to their feet in alarm and wonder. No time to reason or investigate! I have heard, nay seen, an infantry regiment firing with infinite rapidity as an enemy charged their lines. Thus sounded the crackers in Frank's pocket. The scene defied description! Jim leaped to his dresser, while poor old Frank took up the whole kitchen with his bounds, both hands beating and threshing vainly upon his coat-tails; and his shrieks broken only by wholesale denunciations of "dem chillun.' " I am sorry to say it, but I think his language was worse than old Hagar's, for *he* slid into profanity, and *she* did not. It shows how entirely the negroes, old and young were our playmates and comrades, when I tell you that even this audacious outrage remained unpunished *because the story never reached the source of justice.*

Geoffrey was our house servant and his wife, Nancy, was a chambermaid. When his work was over of an evening he used to lock all the doors of the house on the inside and then pass out through the pantry, of which he carried the key to let himself in at early dawn. For in those days negroes guarded all our belongings, because they had not been yet taught to knock at the door of opportunity by robbing and despoiling their masters. He was an excellent and faithful servant and we continued to be friends until his death some years after the war. He was a man of very high temper, and once lost control of it to his serious danger, for, in an altercation with an overseer, he had struck him, which was then a very serious offense. In the quarrel the overseer was entirely wrong and Geoffrey was entirely right, except that his justifiable passion carried him too far. My uncle investigated the affair, and Geoffry was punished and the overseer peremptorily dismissed. So the matter ought to have rested. But the overseer desired revenge, and he induced one or two of the planters and many of his own class in the neighborhood to see in it a result of the infamous John Brown's teachings, then exciting the country. Poor Geoffrey was arrested and carried to Walterboro for trial. We employed at considerable expense the best lawyers in the district to defend him, and my uncle and others attended to testify in his behalf. I think he was found guilty, but the extenuating circumstances were shown so clearly, and the saner public opinion set so strongly in his favor that he was set free with a nominal punishment.

## VI

I do not remember when I first mounted a horse, for in my memories I seem always to have been in the habit of riding. But I was first allowed to use a gun when nine years old. An old double barrel "Manton" of eighteen gauge had been changed from a flint-lock to a percussion-cap lock. This had been kept in good condition, and I was allowed to use it as my own. Old Bunc used at first to go along with me, so as to teach me how to shoot. I soon got beyond his teaching and thenceforward my gun was my constant companion, and one or more of the small darkey boys nearly always attended me. Real game were beyond my reach, for I had no dog, but I occasionally bushwacked a wild-duck or walked up a snipe, and doves gave me much sport.

At one place in the cornfield a point of low ground ran into it, which was wooded, and the doves always lighted on the deciduous trees there when disturbed in the cornfield. We would make an ambush under these trees of a late afternoon and our plantation playmates would keep the doves moving on their feeding ground. But the garden and shrubbery were "taboo," and these covered a number of acres. So the wax-birds escaped us, because they fed on the cedar and other berries, and the mocking birds did not fear us.

Of the huge flocks of blackbirds which swarmed over the barnyard and rice-fields, we took a large toll.

As I grew older it was great sport to stand on the causeway in the mill-pond, when they were under water, and shoot ducks flying in from the river and marshes at dusk. In the short winter twilight I could always get a half dozen or so. These ducks were of great variety, but I think the canvas-back must have been rare, for I only remember shooting one, and he was the only one I ever saw on the wing. The finest duck-shooting was of the Mallard or English Duck, which in great quantities frequented during the day the marshes of the Combahee far down the river. Forty or fifty to one gun was not an unusual bag. A cypress canoe with a good paddler in the stern, the gunner and a retriever in the bow, and plenty of powder in the horn and shot in the shot-bag! That was all! A smart drizzling rain did no harm, but you were better off without a high wind. Bear in mind that this was before the day of breech loaders.

Fish were plentiful in the waters of the Combahee. In the trunk mouths we caught, with a bob-line and a worm, bream and perch, to say nothing of the cat-fish. In the river there were the trout (so-called, but properly the black bass). We fished for them with live silver fish, cruelly run through with the hook. Further down the river where the waters tended to become brackish the rock-fish (sea striped bass) was taken with rod and reel. In the spring of the year innumerable shad ran up the river to spawn and were caught in nets.

Reptiles existed in great numbers, the Pseudonym Seabra, or yellow-belly terrapin, went into the pot as a "cootah." You either made soup of him or perhaps baked him in his own shell. Down the river on the marshes lived a large number of the diamond-backed terrapin, so revered in Maryland. The alligator cootah was rarely eaten by the planter but was highly esteemed by the negroes, who were also fond of the land-terrapin or gopher.

Alligators were frequent and I might fill a book with snake stories, but these belong to all times.

## VII

EVERY planter dealt with a firm of "Factors." These were business men of a high type, who were indeed the people who "did" things for the planter, as their designation imports. If he lived all the year, as many did, in the country, they bought his household groceries and his wines and liquors, shoes and stockings for his family, silks and linens for his wife and daughters. Above all they lent him all the money he wanted. Then on the other hand they sold his rice at a commission of two and one-half per cent. Always they enabled him to calculate his income with great accuracy. For instance, he lived partly on his plantation and partly in a pineland settlement like Summerville and drew all his supplies from the plantation except what his factor paid for in town. At the end of the year after the sale of his rice, say about February 1, he asked the factor what the balance to his credit was. Whatever *this* was, *that* was his income!

Of course people, who had town houses and lived partly or chiefly in town, found life more complicated, and their plantation accounts are many of them models of the book-keeping of a large business. For indeed a large or wealthy planter, wherever he lived, was at the head of an exacting enterprise and grew richer or poorer in proportion to his own intelligence and industry. If he was satisfied with a small interest on his investment, he might leave his affairs to his overseer and factor, but, if he counted his children worth providing for, he had to know and follow his business in every detail.

Before 1860 the planters were, on the average, fairly well-to-do with cash incomes ranging from about five thousand dollars to seventy thousand dollars per annum, but he had to allow for years when in spite of the entire loss of his crop his negroes had to be fully supported.

For boys, the life on the plantation was full of variety, as you may have gathered, but I daresay the ladies of the family may at times have found it a little dull. The neighborhood for visiting had a radius of perhaps fifteen or twenty miles with fifteen or twenty families living on it. These exchanged visits at intervals, and dined or spent the night at the houses of each other. During a morning visit cake and wine were always handed—the cake homemade, the wine always a fine Madeira. The dinners were always at three oclock, and only those living at a great distance would spend the night. Every one had carriages and horses, and all the young people, girls and boys, had their own riding-horses.

The daily routine was varied on certain days. Every Sunday, that we spent on the plantation, at a given hour Cook Renty stood with his horn pointed to the settlement and blew thereon as lustily as he might. Then from the settlement streamed the people all in their Sunday best, old and young even to the babies in arms.

On every side were heard bright merry greetings as they came up with a "Huddie, Missis," and "God bless you, Mossa" and hands were shaken and questions asked after an absent sick one, or a crippled child, while ever and anon was heard the proud tone of an old mauma who presented "two aig for Missis," and one for each young "Mossa," all patronizingly received by Cook Renty with his tall woolen cap, half red, half white, shaped much like an old time night-cap, which fell jauntily on one side of his head, and shook proud approval as the gifts of eggs made quite a basket full.

Then old Renty opened the barrels of flour and of sugar, of mackerel and molasses, and dealt to each head of a family her due proportion of the good things around, while Missis handed each mauma and girl a bright handkerchief or apron, and the boys distributed among the men fancy caps and hats, and occasionally a pair of thick gloves, and such other gifts as may have been provided for these old family dependents. From these old men before them the boys could hear tales of old Maussa, their great grandfather, and the pranks of young Maussa their grandfather, while it was the pride of the plantation that all present except old Pinckney the African, were "born in the family."

And then came the merry games—First, the old men's race, in which are entered none who have not passed the allotted three score years and ten, who with bright laugh and greedy grin form a line under the orders of "Mass Robert," aged ten, the starting judge, while at the end of the short course of fifty yards, stands "Mass Will," holding in outstretched hand the tempting prize, a huge plug of tobacco.

Off they start with tottering steps amid loud applause from their children and children's children standing around. What shouts of triumph as old Amos strides ahead and almost grasps the luscious prize, but to see it snatched away by the desperate rush of Aaron, the patriarch of the plantation. And while the crowd as usual applauds success, little Miss Annie leads away the vanquished to the storehouse, where her tender heart soon comforts in a practical way their disappointment.

And now a fight with "sticks"; perhaps a descendant of the old English play with the quarter staff. Up stand five dusky couples, each man holding a good stout "hickory" by the middle with both hands, and blow well-aimed and better parried meets applause, and cunning feint and wary dodge draw from the old fellows looking on sage remarks of how "dem boys do larn, but dey nebber kin fight stick like old Maussa."

And the wrestling matches in which the boys themselves take part, and Jim throws "Mass Bob" "clean on he back," but gets well repaid by "Mass Will" who hurls him to the ground with all the science acquired at a "man's school."

The mention of school takes us back to town.

## VIII

### RECOLLECTIONS OF CHARLESTON.

LIFE in town and on the plantations was so interchangeable that the two are woven together in my memory.

After my father's death my mother made her town home with her father, Judge Huger, and after his death remained with her mother. My two grandmothers lived on Meeting Street three doors from each other, each in a very patriarchal way. In my grandmother Smith's yard were:

Frank, the butler,
Jim, the cook,
Lewis, the coachman,
Tony and Primus, the footmen,
Isaac, in training for a waiter,
Elsie, a maid, wife of Lewis,
Ann, a maid and sempstress,
Lindy, a maid and sempstress,
Eleanor, a maid,
Dolly, a maid,
Mary, a washerwoman,
Willoughby, a washerwoman,
Retta, a girl in training for a maid.

Mr. and Mrs. Pringle Smith lived with the old lady. Their personal servants were:

Ben, a house servant,
Julia, a washerwoman,

Abby, a child's nurse,
Maria, a maidservant.

Besides these nineteen servants there were sundry and various children. On the Huger establishment were:

Tom, the coachman,
Lucy, his wife, a washerwoman,
Old Jack, a majordomo, who had an independent annuity left him by Judge Huger. He was actually the "mayor of the palace." At my grandmother's death he was to have lived with any son he might select, but he predeceased her.
Betty, a maid,
Betsey, a maid,
Will, a waiter,
Young Tom, a waiter,
Jesse, in training for a waiter,
Old Flora and Balaam, cooks.

My mother's servants were:

Jimmy, a house servant or waiter,
Siah, a horse-boy (groom),
Ben, a boy,
Hannah, a child's nurse,
Henny, a maid,
Charlotte, my sisters' maid,
Tetty, a washerwoman,
Mary and Johnny were Henny's children.

Mr. and Mrs. Allen Izard had their rooms in the house, where they lived with us for some months of every year. They brought always three or four servants of their own. Joe Manigault also had his own room, and stayed with us some months yearly. He also had his body servant, Bob, and a groom.

The men servants were dressed as a rule in well-made suits of "livery," made by tailors (free persons of colour). Every family of importance had its own liveries with differences in colours, well-known and easily distinguished.

These establishments were not at all unusual, most of our friends having similar ones.

My grandmother Huger's household was run after my grandfather's death on rather a modest scale, whereas my grandmother Smith lived much more lavishly. Once a week all her children and their children dined with her, sitting at table over twenty in all, the youngest grandchildren being cared for in the pantry.

In a vague way I remember my father's establishment. He died when I was five years old. He had his own light carriage with a pair of horses, and my mother had a coach with her pair of horses. There was a pony for the boys.

The servants were:

A cook,
A pastry cook who also did a part of the washing,
A coachman,
A groom,
Two house servants or footmen,
A child's nurse,
A couple of maids, and
A washerwoman.

The appointments of his house were very good — glass, china, and silver in reasonable abundance, and the furniture handsome.

As a little child I went to school to a family of maiden ladies, the daughters of Dr. Joseph Johnson. The school was a large one with a "boys' side" and a "girls' side." As boys always went to a "man's school" at about ten years and the girls remained, their "side" was naturally very much larger. I left this excellent school at the age of nine with my brother Bob at the age of ten. We joined the school of Searle, Miles and Sachtleben. Searle was an old Englishman, who had succeeded another old Englishman named Coates. Miles belonged to South Carolina, and was a budding clergyman of our church. Sachtleben was a German who had fought a duel with pistols at a university. His opponent was very badly wounded, and he fled the country in consequence. They were fine teachers, and after spending three years at their school and three more with Sachtleben, I acquired the basis of an excellent education.

Never a holiday was given in my day except July 4, and the months of April and December. If the summer was very hot we were occasionally allowed a week in August, for which the boys usually handed in a petition.

Among the excellent schools for girls, besides that of the Misses Johnson, were those of the Murden ladies, Madam Togno and, a little earlier, Madam Talvande. The last named was as a child one of the refugees from the San Domingo massacre—many of whom made their way to Charleston.

The boys and girls of Charleston were very fond of dancing, and in my day danced a good deal. Many of these dances were handsome entertainments but most of them were informal, with the girls taking turns at the piano. My recollection is so full of them that perhaps I exaggerate the number, but I cannot exaggerate the pleasure they gave me.

As we kept in town through these years a buggy horse and a riding horse, and my grandmother Smith kept a Shetland pony for our use, our afternoons were largely spent on horseback. At one time we used to meet at the yard of some friends named Lewis, where by setting a washerwoman's pole on barrels we made a very fair jumping pole for our ponies. Joe Manigault had then a pair of grey tackies, and one afternoon he lent one, named Bolivar, to Bob, who took him over the pole two or three times in handsome style. A friend, called Haskell Rhett, begged a turn, and got an over-turn, for Bolivar tipped the pole which swung between his legs, and the pony, the rider, the pole, and the barrels rolled over on the ground like a jig-saw puzzle. Rhett fell hard on his head, but luckily he arose unhurt. Bolivar, however, got up on three feet with a badly sprained shoulder. A mournful procession led him home, where we found his owner and told our tale in full expectancy of an outbreak of wrath.

The outbreak came in this shape: "The fool horse should have raised his feet higher." That group of small boys thought cousin Joe the finest fellow in America!

During race-week we always attended the races on Saturday, and always with white ribbons in our button-holes. These marked us as of the family of a member, and admitted us to the course and the members stand.

## IX

No negroes were allowed on the streets of the city between drum-beat at night (retreat) and drum-beat in the morning (reveille). A chief duty of the police was to arrest any one then found unless indeed he was provided with a pass (called a ticket), signed by his owner or a member of his owner's family. The morning drum-beat took place at daybreak; and in the evening at quarter past ten o'clock in summer, and quarter past nine in the winter. The drum was beaten at the main door of the Guard-house on Broad Street by a negro man named Peter Brown, and he was assisted by a less important darkey who played the fife. This military signal was preceded on the stroke of the hour by the "bell-ring," which lasted for fifteen minutes. "First bell-ring" was always two hours ahead of "last bell-ring," say at seven in winter and nine o'clock in summer, and corresponded, I suppose to "tattoo." During the day the negroes were only restrained from going where they pleased by a master's orders or by the needs of their daily routine of service. There were no latch-keys or night-locks in those days, and one of the men servants had to sit up to "answer the bell" until every member of the family was at home, and it was too late for visitors, when they locked up the house and retired to their own quarters. In our house the footmen performed this night-duty by turns. It was considered rather uncivilized for the servants to sleep under the same roof with "the family," and in every yard there were outhouses built especially to accommodate them. In the lowest story of one of these was the cook-kitchen, and wash-kitchen, the former being nearest the house. In our yard the servants were sometimes allowed to have dancing in the evening, to which their friends came, but they always broke up at drum-beat, so as to get home before that ceased.

Many negroes, especially the mechanics, were allowed to "work out" or to "hire their own time." For these the city authorities issued a license, as was and still is done in many occupations.

A most ridiculous trade is to-day carried on in the curiosity shops, which sell the very ordinary bits of brass as "slave-badges" at high prices, the number being supposed, I believe, to represent the slave's number on his master's plantation or in his household, just as a convict is known by his number in a penitentiary! Doubtless many of these commonplace licenses have been dispersed over the North as curiosities of slavery!

The jurisdiction of the master over the slave for small offenses did not cease in the city, but the punishment was inflicted in an orderly way by a police official at a public institution called the work-house.

The white man, adjudged by a court to a whipping, received his punishment in the market place in the presence of the Sheriff or his deputy as previously mentioned.

A good deal of money in a small way circulated among the negroes, and the keepers of the smaller grocery shops made a good profit out of this trade. These were chiefly Germans, who in many cases were bold breakers of the law against selling liquor to the blacks. I remember as a little boy once seeing old Frank lead out of the dining room an intoxicated Tony, who remembered however that "honor rooted in dishonor stood," and resolutely refused to give the name of the vendor. These shops were always at corners, and were called "Dutchman corner-shops." This aspersion on the Hollander was very unjust, for of them there were few and they were merchants of standing and repute.

The negro children in town were, as on plantations, carefully trained. The girls were often sent to sewing schools or to pastry-cooks. Such a school was kept near us by a free person of color named Julianna. I often went there to buy cocoanut or ground-nut cakes (varieties of candy) and used to peep into her room back of the shop, which was filled with negro girls plying the needle. Another pastry-cook near us was named Nannie Cross, and her specialties were rather cakes of various sorts. Bob and I as little chaps would club our money and get there one saucer of ice-cream with two spoons, which we ate in a little arbour with old Nannie (an f.p.c.) beaming affection over us.

The fourth of July was a very grand fête for the negroes. The military parade always took place on account of the heat very early in the morning, and was dismissed with the firing of three volleys on the East Battery. On Meeting Street from Chalmers Street to the South Battery and along the South Battery the sidewalks were crowded with booths kept by old negro maumas, and many more were under the trees on the Battery. The viands they sold were mostly sweets, and cooling drinks. Whatever you bought you ate standing up or walking, and consumed your soft drinks on the spot. Sassafras beer was a fine drink.

I learned one day how to compute money at one of these booths:

A quarter dollar was twenty-five cents,
Fo'(ur)pence was six and one-quarter cents,
One and ninepence was thirty-one and one-quarter cents,
Ten pence was eighteen and three-quarter cents.

One day I bought an article for fo'pence and tendered a quarter. I received in change eighteen coppers and demanded another. The old darkey took back the change and said: "You buy fo'pence wut-fo' fo'pence make a quarter! Then handing me six cents said "Dat mek two fo'pence" and handing over twelve cents said: "Dat mek fo' fo'pence! Wha' you want now?" I took the coppers and the lesson, and went my mournful way, for the logic beat me!

Sassafras beer was a favorite brew, and was in fact a fermented drink. My brother, Bob, and I went into a most lucrative partnership with Lewis the coachman. We supplied the molasses from my grandmother's barrel, the sassafras roots from the plantation, rough rice from the mill, and the bottles, and Lewis supplied pine-tops, which he cut by the road, and his own skill. In return we got two or three bottles a day, and Lewis sold the balance for his own account. As we thus paid four or five times the value of each bottle we got, it was an early example of the great advantage organized labor has over capital.

There was no official "bell-ringer" in those days, but an old custom survived up to the war. When a child was lost, whether white or black, a man with a hand-bell walked through all the streets ringing the bell with a slow, mournful stroke. The cadence of this was very distinct.

Another survival was the way in which official proclamations were made by an individual, the sheriff I suppose, in a uniform coat and cocked hat who drove at a walk in an open carriage, accompanied by a fife and drum. At important street corners the carriage would stop and the fife and drum would give forth a final flourish, upon which the dignified official would rise from his seat and read the proclamation in the loudest of voices. Then with beat of drum he proceeded to the next corner.

The Guard House stood on Broad Street just across from St. Michael's

Church. At the gate of the Guard House a sentry stood all night, and another was stationed in St. Michael's Steeple. When the clock struck the hours and quarters, the latter in a sing-song voice would cry out the time—"A quarter past three-e-e o'clock and all's well-l-l-l." The cry would be taken up and repeated by the Guard House sentry. But when a blaze or the smoke of a fire showed itself in the town, the steeple woke up to be sure. A red light was hung out on the side of the steeple pointing towards the fire, and the bell-ringer imitated Poe's "Bells" as well as he could. The chime of bells became a wild jangle, and the policeman in each street ran the length of his beat, unnecessarily shouting "fire!! fire!" and springing his rattle with all his might. Then from every engine house emerged the engine racing to the fire, starting with few men at the ropes but gathering others as they ran. For the first water thrown upon the fire meant a small prize and a great pride. The small boys might pull at these ropes, but had to fall back when the fire was reached. The engines were worked by hand with double banked brakes, and the men above stood on "knife-boards."—"First water! who? who? three cheers for the Phoenix!" The negro engine companies were numbered without names, and the emulation among them was equally great as among the whites, for they too received a prize for greatest speed.

Through all my boyish recollections there runs a thread of political excitement. I was at the White Sulphur Springs a few months after the execution of John Brown. Then, for the first time, a purely sectional party was seeking the Presidency, and the talk of Secession ceased to be a threat and became a prediction. I was at a station on the North River near New York when the express train rolled by bringing the newspapers the day after the election of Lincoln, but I was back in South Carolina when the Ordinance of Secession was passed, and through the period of tension that followed. In November, 1861, Gen'l Robert E. Lee took command of this military department. My uncle, Mr. Allen Smith Izard had been his classmate at West Point, and I saw him quite often as a visitor at my grandmother Huger's house. My cousin, Capt. Joseph Manigault, was then on the Staff of Gen'l Lee, and I met them both a few weeks later at "Oakland" (on the Combahee) where they stayed for a short time. Gen'l Lee ordered a heavy earthwork to be built near the mouth of the Combahee, and I was sent up the river with a requisition to all the planters to send down all their negro men to do this work.

When I became seventeen I enlisted in the Confederate Army.

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Sass, Herbert Ravenel, 1884-1958.
A Carolina rice plantation of the fiftie

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